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Grand Lodge told to give names

Masons face showdown with MPs

By RICHARD FORD HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE leaders of Britain's Freemasons were locked in a struggle with MPs last night after being ordered to name members allegedly involved in a series of police scandals.

The United Grand Lodge of England risks being charged with contempt of Parliament if it defies a formal order from the Home Affairs Select Committee to produce the information, which the MPs have been seeking for months.

The move, at the end of an acrimonious session of the committee, is the second threat in two days to the secrecy of the movement. On Wednesday, Jack Straw said that Masons working in the criminal justice system would have to register their membership.

The committee's decision was said last night to demonstrate a "seachange" in attitudes towards Freemasonry. Martin Short, author of *Inside the Brotherhood*, said: "The idea that a parliamentary committee should be calling the Masons to account in quite this peremptory manner is astonishing. If you go back thirty, twenty or even ten years it is inconceivable this would have happened. This shows that a huge amount of public concern that has existed for maybe 100 years has finally come out."

There are 240,000 Freemasons in England and Wales, and their influence reaches into the Royal Family. The committee that must decide how to respond to the MPs' order includes the Duke of Kent, the Grand Master, Lord Fitzsimon, a pro-Grand Master, the Marquess of North-



The symbol of the masonic movement

ampton; the Earl of Cadogan; the retired Court of Appeal judge Sir John Balcombe; and Judge J. Sessions, a judge advocate of the Fleet.

They will have 14 days to reply after receiving formal notification of the order from the Committee Secretary at 11, St. James's Place, London SW1A 1BJ. Although their lawyers indicated that they would comply with the order, it is by no means certain that the Board of General Purposes of the United Lodge will agree to the request.

Chris Mullin, chairman of the select committee, said: "It is obvious that the powers of the committee are being challenged and we owe it to ourselves and to Parliament to rise to the occasion." The committee was not prejudging the issue of Masonic involvement in the cases - which include the Birmingham pub bombings. "We cannot come to a conclusion until we see who was a Mason," he said.

The committee's decision came after more than an hour of angry questioning during which both Mr. Mullin and Commander Michael Higham, the grand secretary of the United Grand Lodge, came

close to losing their tempers. Mr. Mullin said that the committee had presented the United Grand Lodge with a list of 161 names over the summer with a request to say who were Freemasons. Ninety-six were former members of the West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad, which was disbanded in 1989 for corruption.

About 60 - including some journalists as well as police officers - were involved with the investigation that led to the wrongful conviction of the Birmingham Six. Seven were involved in investigating John Stalker, the former Deputy Chief Constable of Greater Manchester who was suspended in 1986 while conducting an inquiry into shoot-to-kill allegations against the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

Commander Higham accused MPs of conducting a "fishing expedition" and complained that the events under consideration dated back to the Seventies and Eighties. "I rather think the whole thing is pretty academic. If it was a recent case of bad police work or a miscarriage of justice, we would be dealing with the police authority, not this committee," he said. Mr. Mullin told him sharply that 30 convictions had been overturned as a result of the activities of the serious crime squad. He said the committee had been told by police officers - including Masons - that Freemasons had operated within the squad as "firms within firms".

When Commander Higham complained that there still had not been any specific allegations, Mr. Mullin told him: "They were holding plastic



East Ender Eva Priest entertains The Queen

THE QUEEN spent 10 minutes yesterday chatting with Eva Priest, 85, a lifelong East Ender, when she and the Duke of Edinburgh visited the regenerated New Kingshead Estate in Hackney.

The tiny pensioner, who had been chosen to show the Queen her purpose-built one-bedroom ground floor flat, said: "I could have talked to her all day. It was lovely to see her. She asked about the house and I showed her round. I really enjoyed it."

Mrs. Priest, a mother of three, also told the Queen how she began working at the age of 14 in Clerkenwell, where she made paper roses, and was paid two old pence for making a gross of them.

The Queen, besieged by children offering her flowers, later unveiled a plaque outside the five millionth new home to have the National House Building Council's warranty, which guarantees building standards.

This house is occupied by Mrs. Anne-Marie Cox, 67, who said the visit was totally unexpected. "I'm so proud," she said.

Firm pledges to replace faulty hips

By IAN MURRAY MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE company which made the hip implants that have been withdrawn because of their high failure rate pledged last night to pay for re-examining all patients fitted with one and to replace those hips that are faulty at a cost which could reach £20 million.

The decision by 3M Health Care to pay the total bill came as the surgeon who first noticed that the hips were failing too often said he was accused by the company of being incompetent when he reported his findings to the British Orthopaedic Association in September, 1995.

Meanwhile, the special helpline set up by the Department of Health have been

swamped with calls from some of the 250,000 people who received hip replacements while the 3M Capital Implant was on the market. More than 6,000 calls were logged in the first nine hours that the line was open, with 1,000 coming in from Liverpool alone.

Although no more than 4,700 people could have been fitted with the 3M model, the only records of who has them are kept in hospitals by the orthopaedic surgeons who conducted the operation. It could take months before everyone is traced, which means that all other patients will either have to be patient or try to find out for themselves from the hospitals what kind of hip they have been fitted with.

While 3M is paying for all

medical treatment needed, lawyers specialising in medical cases predict that hundreds of patients fitted with the faulty hips will still be able to sue for compensation under the Consumer Protection Act.

James Hunter, an orthopaedic surgeon at the Harlow Wood Orthopaedic Hospital in Nottingham, said last night that there had been far too much delay in taking action. "We last fitted a 3M Capital implant at the end of 1993 and within a year it was clear to us that it was going wrong too often. We presented a paper to the British Orthopaedic Association conference in September 1995 showing our findings, only to be abused by 3M who said the only trouble was that we were poor surgeons."

"We had difficulty getting published. We submitted our report to the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* in August 1996, but it took until last July for it to be printed. By then it was well known on the orthopaedic grapevine that these things just didn't work."

He said that at the time the paper was drawn up, about a quarter of the 3M implants had failed within two years, but that half the patients originally fitted with one had now had to have it replaced.

3M withdrew their implant from the market last March for commercial reasons, Nick Rawling, their sales and marketing manager said last night. "There are over 60 different types on the market and there was too much competition. There was no

question of people thinking it was no good. But it was just not selling well."

Implant failures, page 4



"It's not a masonic handshake - my hip's gone again"

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Racist pair held over anthrax plot

By TUNKU VARADARAJAN AND TOM RHODES

TWO white supremacists were arrested in Las Vegas yesterday, accused of a plot to release anthrax spores into a public place, possibly the New York subway system.

Aurelio Flores, of the FBI, said that the men belonged to the Aryan Nations organisation, a racist group based in Idaho which aims to "preserve and protect the white race - the biological species by which and for which America was established".

Mr Flores described the matter as serious: "These individuals were involved in the construction of a weapon. We have no idea where they were going to use it." FBI sources in New York, however, suggested that their city was the likely target. One of the men - Larry Wayne Harris - had a detailed map of the subway at his home after being arrested for obtaining bubonic plague bacteria through the post last year, an offence for which he was put on probation. The

other man held yesterday was named as Billy Levitt. The arrests came as the American security agencies are particularly alert to the threat of biological attack, and specialists from both the Pentagon and the FBI were sent to examine the substance believed to be anthrax yesterday.

Federal investigators have focused increasing attention on rightwing extremists, white supremacists and paramilitary groups since the fatal FBI sieges at Ruby Ridge, Idaho, and Waco, Texas, and the Oklahoma City bombing that killed 168 people in 1995.

Aryan Nations, one of America's most prominent organisations of racist fanatics, has been linked to bombings, murders and bank robberies. Timothy McVeigh, the man sentenced to death for the Oklahoma attack, is believed to have been connected with the organisation. Founded in the mid-1970s

by an activist named Richard Butler, the group's headquarters in Hayden Lake, Idaho, is home to a church - the Church of Jesus Christ Christian - and the political organisation itself.

The church's theology is built around the belief that America's white Christians are the people referred to as Jews in the Bible; that Jews themselves are the children of Satan and that black people are dehumanised as "mud people".

The politics of Aryan Nations begins with the belief that America is the true Israel and the country is being denied its true destiny by ZOG, the Zionist Occupied Government in Washington. The animal disease anthrax is caused by a bacterium which is widely distributed around the world (Our Science Editor writes). Anybody with access to the bacterium and modest biological knowledge could produce pounds of bac-

teria in a single flask within days. To spread effectively, the bacteria would need to be turned into spores, which happens when they are brought into contact with the air. These are light and easily carried by the wind, so would be distributed throughout an underground system, though possibly not very efficiently.

Any terrorist making anthrax spores would need to be immunised against the disease to carry out the procedure safely. The infection can be caught through the skin, by breathing in the spores, or by eating infected meat.

The results of a terrorist attack would depend on how quickly the agent was identified, and the dose delivered to the victims. Assuming prompt diagnosis and treatment with an antibiotic such as penicillin or tetracycline, most people would survive. In this respect, anthrax is less deadly than nerve gas.



New face at Crufts

A new debutante was launched in the aristocratic dog season at Crufts yesterday - the grand basset griffon vendéen will be competing for the first time in a hounds class at the show next month. Page 11

Bumped off

A century of tradition on the Cam is coming to an end with sweeping changes to the Bumps, the rowing event synonymous with Cambridge, which mean 150 fewer students can take part after 17 crews were cut. Page 2

Blair wants written Saddam pledges

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

TONY Blair yesterday told Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary-General, to demand written guarantees from Saddam Hussein that he would not obstruct UN access to any weapons sites or limit the time on inspections.

In a co-ordinated move with the United States Mr Blair telephoned Mr Annan to tell him that Saddam had to get the clear message that there could be no fudging and that the threat of force was real.

The demands for written assurances came as senior British officials admitted that the West could not take Saddam at his word. But the move also reinforced doubts over whether Mr Annan would be able to return with an outcome that satisfied either President Clinton or Mr Blair. The Prime Minister's conversation with Mr Annan was one of a series with UN

leaders designed to show Baghdad that he carried the authority of all five permanent members of the Security Council.

Senior officials also expressed doubts, however, over how much Saddam was being told about what was going on at the UN and elsewhere.

Downing Street also disclosed that Mr Blair had received a letter yesterday from Boris Yeltsin, the Russian leader, which said: "We stand together for the unconditional implementation by Iraq of the UN Security Council resolutions for the elimination of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and for the full carrying out of inspections in the whole territory of that country."

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Food for thought about the fat, the thin and the indigestible

The Labour MP for Erith & Thamesmead yesterday reminded MPs at Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Questions of the adage: "We are what we eat." If so, this MP must have stopped eating, for he is sadly diminished. In the last Parliament he was John Austin-Walker. Now he reappears as John Austin. And just when the new Labour Party was made safe for double-barrelled people to inhabit...

Diane Abbott (Hackney N & Stoke Newington) is by no means diminished. If Ms

Abbott is what she eats, then Heaven send reinforcements to her grocer. Yesterday she discussed Europe's banana supplies. One fears she may have eaten them. She dresses these days in black stretch-velvet, and looks like an exploding mole.

Who knows whether Andrew Rowe is what he eats? If so, the Tory MP for Faversham & Mid Kent (who asked about "the Brogdale Trust") starts his day with a stick of celery: tall, brittle and surprisingly dippy. John Whittingdale (C. Maldon & E

Chelmsford) complained about the beef ban. But no charred steak for Mr Whittingdale: whose long, pale, fleshy jaws remind us of Oscar Wilde in his middle years. He must be weaned on veal.

Criticised over the beef-on-the-bone ban, Jeff Rooker, a junior minister, put up a furious show of resistance. A feisty Brummie who sounds forever on the verge of glassing you, his performances are more memorable for their perkiness, variety and colour, than for any

coherent theme. I think Mr Rooker dines on overspiced paellas, with peppers, prawns and olive pits.

The thought that MPs might be what they eat was hard to banish, even after food left the Commons agenda and John Morris, QC, MP, the Attorney-General, arrived to take questions.

Can there be anyone in

Christendom — even among fellow-members of a profession accustomed to being paid by the paragraph — capable of burbling away for so long in such suffocating circumlocutions, and saying absolutely nothing? Whatever "zippy" means, the Attorney-General is the opposite of it. Mr Morris, who does literally gargle as he speaks due to an

idiosyncratic pronunciation of his r's, reminds me of one of those interminable legal dinners where after about 15 limp courses of doubtful quality in a dimly lit hall, everybody gorges on port until they slump.

Only when lawyer-politicians meet could a complaint about "the late return of briefs" be handled without a smile. The Attorney-General, wishing to observe that it was often hard to know when a case would start or end, enlightened us thus: "It is not always a certainty — to put it

mildly — and we can only anticipate with varying degrees of precision..."

What seemed like hours later, he was still talking... and I hope there will now be some expedition on that front... A lawyer's idea of expedition (and it is certainly not to Mount Ross or the Danakil Depression) on this or any other "front" led to answers of a length and banality which amused Dennis Skinner until he could no longer contain himself.

"Gotcha!" he shouted, as Mr Morris lurched into the

fourteenth paragraph of his answer to his Tory Shadow, Sir Nicholas Lyell (who, if he is what he eats, must dine on heaps of those oiled aubergine-strips that slip down before you can even chew).

Sir Nicholas got up to demand an answer to the second part of his question.

"Fow!" shouted Skinner. The Attorney-General ground into the second part of his answer.

"Bill!" shouted Skinner. "Knocked 'im out in a first round." Skinner eats nails.



POLITICAL SKETCH

Tension rises as murder is blamed on IRA

By Martin Fletcher, Chief Ireland Correspondent

THE IRA was blamed for another killing yesterday as the British and Irish Governments prepared to announce whether Sinn Fein would be expelled from the peace talks for last week's two murders, also linked to the IRA.

Security sources said they strongly suspected the IRA killed Kevin Conway, 30, whose body was found in a derelict farmhouse outside the village of Aghalee, Co Antrim, late on Wednesday. His hands were tied behind his back and he had suffered head injuries.

The other most likely suspect, the Loyalist Volunteer Force, denied responsibility for Mr Conway's murder, claiming it was the work of "republicans sorting out an internal problem".

Sinn Fein's expulsion appeared all but certain even before the discovery of Mr Conway's body and the Royal Ulster Constabulary is bracing itself for trouble in nationalist areas.

In Dublin, Sinn Fein continued its attempt to win an injunction preventing its expulsion. The hearing was adjourned for a second day after Irish government lawyers argued that the issue was political and not one for the courts.

Mr Conway disappeared from his home on Lurgan's republican Kilwiltke estate, five miles from Aghalee, at midday on Tuesday while his wife was shopping and he was looking after their three-month-old son.

John O'Dowd, a local Sinn Fein councillor, accused loyalist paramilitaries of abducting him, pointing out that his body was found near the spot where LVF members killed a Catholic taxi driver named Michael McGoldrick in 1996, and an 18-year-old Catholic girl named Bernadette Martin last July.

Security officials said it was much more likely that Mr Conway had been killed by the IRA. They believed he was seized from his home, because he was wearing slippers and left his baby unattended, but doubted that loyalist paramilitaries would dare operate in the Kilwiltke estate. He had a criminal record, had been assaulted before, and was allegedly involved in selling cigarettes and alcohol to children.

Confidence in the Royal Ulster Constabulary among Catholics has risen significantly, according to a survey published yesterday. The number giving positive ratings about the force was up from 37 per cent in September 1996 to 49 per cent in September last year. The survey also indicated that confidence among Protestants has fallen, with positive ratings down from 88 per cent to 85 per cent.



An all-woman crew takes part in the Lent Bumps. One rower said: "Colleges are more concerned at their position in the examination league table than in the Bumps chart"

Dons stick an oar into Bumps

David Charter on the Cambridge rowers being given a lecture

A CENTURY of tradition on the Cam comes to an end today after a victory for Cambridge dons who want students to spend more time in lectures and less on the river. In the most sweeping changes since 1887 to the Bumps, the rowing event synonymous with Cambridge, 150 fewer students can take part after 17 crews were cut from the competition.

Student boat captains reluctantly agreed to start races later in the day and drop a whole division of men's crews after pressure from "high level" university academics. As the number of crews has grown, so has dons' concern that academic attendance — and college results — are suffering.

One disgruntled rower said: "Col-

leges are more concerned at their position in the examination league table than in the Bumps chart." The biannual Bumps are so named because crews chase each other and try to collide with the boat in front, giving them a starting place ahead of them in the next day's racing. For the first time since rules were laid down for the Lent Bumps in 1887, they will run over five days instead of four. But with the later start of 2pm instead of noon, even the extra day means the reduction of men's divisions from five to four and the loss of 17 crews.

Competition in the "Getting-on-Races", today's eliminators for ten

places in the fourth division, will be the fiercest for many years. Lent Bumps start next week and, unlike the May Bumps, run during term-time.

The changes were agreed after lengthy and heated debate, which started in October when Pete Convey, the academic who chairs the Cambridge University Boat Club, wrote to students advising them to change. He said: "As the body responsible for regulation of college rowing and racing on the Cam, we cannot be seen as endorsing a conflict with lectures. Although the pressure is as yet informal, it comes

from very high levels in the university."

The strongest opposition came from the keenest rowing colleges, including Trinity and St John's, which have up to six teams and will lose the chance to enter so many crews. Two groups which stood to lose their only crews, St Edmund's College and students based at Addenbrookes Hospital, have been allowed automatic entry in the fourth division.

George Gilbert, the student secretary of the CUBC, said students acted before a feared crackdown by the university authorities. Mr Gilbert, a

PhD student in astro-physics, said: "University lecturers tend to notice if suddenly half their students don't turn up for a few days because they are rowing."

The changes mean at least two crews will be forced to miss out on the Bumps at Trinity, the largest rowing college. Matthew Arnold, Trinity boat captain, said: "questioned the academic grounds for the cuts. 'We have won the cup for overall best boat club for the last two years and came top in the examinations in the summer.'

"Rowing helps to produce better organised students who are more employable as a result of this, because it is a very people-orientated sport."

Masons' showdown with MPs

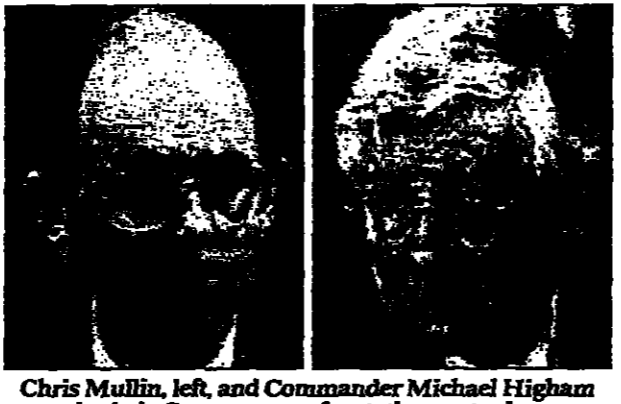
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bags over people's heads in order to get confessions".

He also accused Commander Higham of going back on an assurance given last November that he would release the names on the understanding that only Mr Mullin himself and the committee's two clerks saw them.

Mr Higham told MPs that the Freemasons thought that government plans for registers of members working in the criminal justice system was draconian action. There was a feeling of "impending persecution" and a good deal of anger about the slur on their integrity. "We know we have a few bad apples, the rest of ordinary Freemasons are decent chaps," he said. Things had changed since the 1970s when police had been extremely uncomfortable on finding themselves in lodges with convicted robbers.

Mr Higham added that Masons would not necessarily know who was a fellow member, since secret signs of recognition were not used promiscuously. "People don't stand around in strange attitudes waiting to be recognised as Freemasons." He refused to demonstrate the secret signs, saying: "I promised I would not."

If the United Grand Lodge refuses to obey the order to



Chris Mullin, left, and Commander Michael Higham in their Commons confrontation yesterday

hand over the names of the Freemasons, the select committee could report the apparent contempt to the Speaker, who could invite the House to deal with the issue as a matter of privilege in which there was prima facie evidence that the Freemasons had interfered with the rights of the House to carry out its business.

The matter would then probably be referred to the Commons Standards and Privileges Committee who would study the evidence and decide what action to take. There is no penalty laid down for contempt and Parliament still retains the right to imprison someone found guilty, though that power has not been used since the 1880s. The

the Birmingham Six, the cause with which he is most associated in the public mind. He categorically denied being an IRA supporter and while some assumed that he was a republican sympathiser, he insisted that he was driven by a simple desire for justice.

Mr Mullin now appears a much more mellow MP than he was as a Bennite member of the hard left Campaign Group and former editor of *Tribune*.

Michael Higham, a 62-year-old former Royal Navy Commander has been Grand Secretary of the United Grand Lodge of England since 1980 and for the past fourteen years has been implementing a policy aimed at removing some of the secrecy surrounding Freemasonry.

He had expected to remain in office until 2001 but has been forced to take early retirement later this year after falling out with superiors in the movement. Mr Higham told the committee that he did not know the reason why.

Educated at Epsom College, he joined the Royal Navy in 1954, was called to the Bar in 1968 and finally retired from the Navy in 1977. In that year he joined Freemasons Hall in Great Queen Street as principal assistant to the Grand Secretary, becoming Grand Secretary in 1980.

Blood test may give a simpler CJD diagnosis

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

A SIMPLE test for Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease could come from measuring the levels of a protein in the blood, German scientists have reported.

They have found that the protein S100, often found in the bloodstream after brain damage, can be used for diagnosis. The test is simpler and safer than examining spinal fluid for traces of aberrant prion proteins believed responsible for the disease.

Rapid diagnosis would be valuable because in the new variant form of CJD, victims often first complain of severe depression or other psychiatric disorders. Only later do more specific symptoms appear. Earlier diagnosis could prevent inappropriate treatment and minimise the risk of victims passing on the disease, such as through blood transfusions.

In the *British Medical Journal*, a team led by Dr Markus Otto of the Psychiatric Clinic at Georg-August University in Göttingen examined blood samples from 224 suspected victims. Levels of S100 were

about three times as high in the 108 patients ultimately found to have CJD. Exactly what S100 signifies is not clear; originally it was thought to be produced when brain cells were damaged by disease or accident, but it is now believed to be a marker for higher levels of activity in brain cells known to be involved in CJD.

The test does not distinguish between nvCJD and the classical form of the disease, but since nvCJD occurs in younger people while traditional CJD is found in the elderly, or in patients with relations who have also had it, combining the test result with the age would be a good indicator.

Alan Coomber, landlord of the Bell Inn at Iden, near Rye, East Sussex, is the first person in England to face prosecution for breaching the beef-on-the-bone ban. After a visit by health inspectors posing as customers, he has been told he can expect a summons. A hotelier in Scotland is due in Selkirk Sheriff Court on March 10.

Rapist, 14, held

A boy aged 14 who raped a 13-year-old girl as she walked home was sentenced to four years' custody. He dragged her into a disused garage in Swansea and sexually assaulted her before carrying out the rape. Mr Justice Rothery told the boy at Cardiff Crown Court: "You are young, but old in street wisdom and old in crime."

Elgar triumph

Record stores yesterday reported that people were flocking to buy a CD of the Elgar unfinished symphony that was completed by Anthony Payne and given its premiere, performed by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, last weekend. It became HMV's best-selling classical title and is expected to top the classical charts on Sunday.

CORRECTIONS

The Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick, did not reject a request that the late Enoch Powell be buried there, as reported, February 13. The churchyard has been full for over a century, and Mr Powell's request was to be buried where he was in fact interred, at Warwick cemetery.

The Queen Mother's first hip prosthesis was not, as reported yesterday, a "Stanmore", but a "Furlong".



Franco says "Stop staring at this price, you have until 5 March to call."

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'40 girls at a time for playboy Brunei prince'

PROSTITUTES, procured by an English madam, and drinking games were part of an extraordinary portrait of a playboy prince outlined yesterday in the High Court by his former London emissary.

Wahche Manoukian, a wealthy Armenian-born businessman known as Bob, told the court in a witness statement that Prince Jefri of Brunei had developed such an "appetite for girls" — up to 40 at any one time — that his conduct had become "completely unacceptable by Western standards".

Mr Manoukian, a Christian, said the relationship between him and the youngest brother of the Sultan of Brunei, a Muslim, broke down on religious grounds and because the prince grew angry at the way his behaviour became the subject of criticism.

The court was told that the breakdown came only after Mr Manoukian had enjoyed a profitable multimillion-pound trading partnership with Prince Jefri during which he supplied the prince with a high-speed yacht, jewellery, cars, paintings including a £16 million Modigliani, and treasures from the Duchess of Windsor's collection.

Mr Manoukian, 53, who with his brother Rafi is suing the prince and being countersued by him, described how the polo-playing royal entertained an entourage of women at the Dorchester Hotel in London after it was

Michael Horsnell is in court to hear details of the extraordinary lifestyle of a multimillionaire

bought by the sultan, the world's richest man, in 1985.

He said: "It was quite obvious that the comings and goings of the girls were becoming more and more embarrassing due to their numbers. There was a grave risk that the newspapers would get hold of the story. There might be up to 40 prostitutes present at the Dorchester at any one time paid for by Prince Jefri, some from England, procured by an English madame who had dealt with Prince Jefri for several years, and some brought in especially by them from the Far East under the pretence that they were maids or ser-

vants." Rafi Manoukian, 44, told him in 1986 that the prince wanted the upper floors of the former Playboy Club in Park Lane, known as the Stanhope Apartments, which he subsequently bought for £21 million. It was an attempt, the court has been told, to keep his prostitutes away from the public eye — though the prince denies any such involvement with women.

Mr Manoukian, who told the court that he travels on an Armenian diplomatic passport, said that in about 1993 Prince Jefri allegedly made the mistake of importing girls from the United States. Mr Manoukian said: "My view

was that bringing in girls from the US would be likely to lead to embarrassing publicity in the US and, possibly, litigation. I was concerned not so much for the reputation of Prince Jefri but for the reputation of the Manoukian family which was well known to have a business relationship with the Brunei royal family, particularly given that we were regular visitors to the US ourselves.

"I told Rafi that he should talk to Prince Jefri and warn him of the potential risk he was running... but Prince Jefri told him that it was none of our business."

On one occasion, in the disco area of the Assurur Palace in Brunei, where some of the women had been brought in for the entertainment of the prince and his close friends, Mr Manoukian said he was shocked to see the prince's young son Bahar and his teenage daughter Princess Hamidah present. The following year, Prince Jefri invited Mr Manoukian to Brunei but he said he took his wife with him so he would not be forced to stay at the Assurur Palace where many American models were staying for a big party.

"Prince Jefri appeared to be upset and irritated with Rafi, particularly when Rafi raised with him his treatment of Pengiran Mustapha — a friend who in spite of being ill with stomach cancer was forced to attend the Assurur and take part in the prince's drinking games.



Rafi and Bob Manoukian outside the High Court yesterday. They are suing Prince Jefri for £80 million

"Prince Jefri's conduct was completely unacceptable by Western standards. Once he started involving American girls, I knew we would have to take precautions not to risk being associated with his behaviour. From then on, there was always a danger that something would happen to cause offence to Prince Jefri and to cause a rift in the relationship."

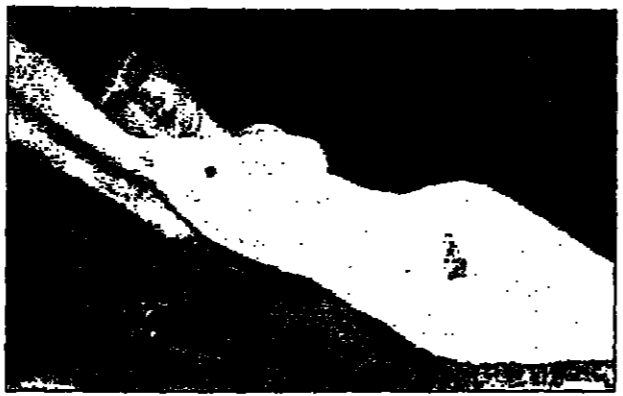
"Once he came to believe that we were criticising him and disapproving of his behaviour and lifestyle, a breakdown in relations was

unavoidable. I believe that religious differences may have played a part... but the fundamental cause of the breakdown was that Prince Jefri was offended and angry that we should act in a way that implied criticism of his conduct."

The prince is accused of failing to honour property deals and is being sued for £80 million by the Manoukian brothers. In the case before Mr Justice Longmore, the prince is countersuing for more than £100 million. He claims the brothers, whose

family worked as middlemen for the Brunei royal family for almost two decades, exploited their close friendship and made unreasonable profits out of him which they concealed.

Mr Manoukian, of Knightsbridge, said that Prince Jefri allowed his account for *objets d'art* and other items to build up for months at a time and he was relieved when the Brunei High Commission paid one bill in 1986 for £1.3 million, the Brunei Investment Agency paid a bill for £3.9 million the next year, and the prince paid a bill of nearly £5 million.



The prince paid £16 million for this Modigliani

Seat belts could have saved bus crash children

By Russell Jenkins

THREE schoolchildren who died when a coach-carrying a school party plunged down a ravine in the French Alps might have survived if they had been wearing seatbelts, an inquest in Bolton heard yesterday.

The families of the dead children — all from St James's Church of England school in Farnworth, near Bolton — gasped and sobbed as they listened to the evidence given by a pathologist.

They were told that it was the first time that the driver, Jim Shaw, from Tameside, Greater Manchester, had driven a left-handed coach and that he had had only 25 minutes' practice before setting off on the activity holiday excursion.

The coach was a replacement for an English one which had broken down. The tyres on the left-hand drive coach were worn, the inquest was told.

Mr Shaw was driving the coach along a straight but narrow Alpine road last July, taking the children for a day of rock climbing, when he lost control. The vehicle somersaulted off the road, hitting trees and ending on its side.

Robert Boardman, 14, Keith Ridding, 14, and Nicola Moore, 15, were thrown from the coach. Nicola was killed instantly and the two boys, who were close friends, died later in hospital.

David Bisset, the pathologist, was asked three times by representatives of the children's families if the injuries they had sustained would have been fatal if the children had been wearing seatbelts.

He gave the same reply each time: "It is highly likely that if the children were restrained by belts, their injuries would have been far less serious."

David Wylie, a physical

education and biology teacher, said that it had not occurred to him to check whether there were seatbelts. It was school policy only to allow children on vehicles with belts fitted. "It seems stupid, but I only knew there weren't any belts afterwards."

Mr Shaw was found guilty by a French court in January of involuntary manslaughter. He was fined the equivalent of £1,230. He told the inquest that he had been driving for 16 years and, if he had not thought himself capable of driving the left-handed coach, he would have allowed somebody else to do it.

Speaking almost in a whisper, he said: "I can say what I have always maintained, that I hit a bump or went down a gully and couldn't get the bus back on the road."

Martin Coppel, the coroner, said he could not follow the French verdict of involuntary manslaughter, claiming that the charge may not translate into domestic law. He ruled that the children's deaths were an accident.

He said: "I believe [Mr Shaw] was unfamiliar with driving left-hand drive and this is what led him to make an error of judgment."



Shaw, English inquest ruled crash an accident

Lifeguard at death pool was untrained

By a Correspondent

A SCHOOLBOY drowned in a swimming pool controlled by a lifeguard with no formal training, an inquest was told yesterday.

Michael Eden, 6, was starting a week-long holiday at the Marine Holiday Park in Rhyl, North Wales, when the accident occurred. He was pulled from the water by another visitor to the complex.

John Wilkie, the lifeguard, whose lifesaving training consisted of a two-hour St John Ambulance Brigade course, told the hearing at Denbigh that initially he could not see the bottom of the pool because of where he was sitting. He had tried to reach the boy but had been unable to do so because he was buoyed up by his T-shirt, and so had called for help.

Michael's mother, Karen Eden, from St Helens on Merseyside, told the hearing that she had been watching her son playing in the pool with his brother, sister and cousin on August 16 last year. She had become distracted when her other son, Ryan,

needed help with his ear plugs. "Then I saw a man pulling a child out of the pool right at the very deep end and realised it was Michael." He was taken to hospital and died later. A post-mortem examination found he had drowned.

Alan Lewis Jones, the North Wales Central deputy Coroner, said guidelines laid down by the Sports Council advised that those running leisure pools should have lifeguards with some form of training.

"It is a very tragic tale of momentary distraction of the carers, of the lifeguard not being able to observe what was under his feet because of where he was sitting. All those events led up to the tragedy. It is a tragic accident and that is the verdict I am recording."

Chewing over an idea to stop Britain gumming up

By James Landale, Political Reporter

NON-STICK chewing gum is being developed by sweet manufacturers to combat the scourge of goopy leftovers which litter Britain's streets, the House of Lords was told yesterday. But it could take a while to perfect.

The issue was raised by Viscount Long, a former Tory Whip who is believed not to have spoken in the Lords for 15 years. He complained to peers that 300,000 pieces of gum could be found on Oxford Street in London at any one time.

The solution to the problem could take up to ten years of research, Baroness Hayman,

the Environment minister, said that the Tidy Britain Group, a charity funded by her department, was working with Wrigley's to develop effective cleansing methods and investigate the possibility of changing the composition of gum to reduce its adhesive qualities.

Later, Philip Hamilton, managing director at Wrigley, said he had a team looking at non-adhesive gum and biodegradable gum. "A prototype has been produced, but it doesn't fit the bill — there are problems with flavouring and so on. It is exciting work, but we don't

expect to have a finished product for five to ten years."

Some 13 million sticks of gum are chewed each day in Britain. Councils spend more than £100 million a year clearing it off the streets.

Viscount Long said: "Is it not the case that the situation is now so serious that Britain is beginning to look like an old English pudding called spotted dick? It is a far better sight to see a herd of cattle chewing the cud than to see a flock of tourists and members of the British public not only chewing gum but spitting it out."

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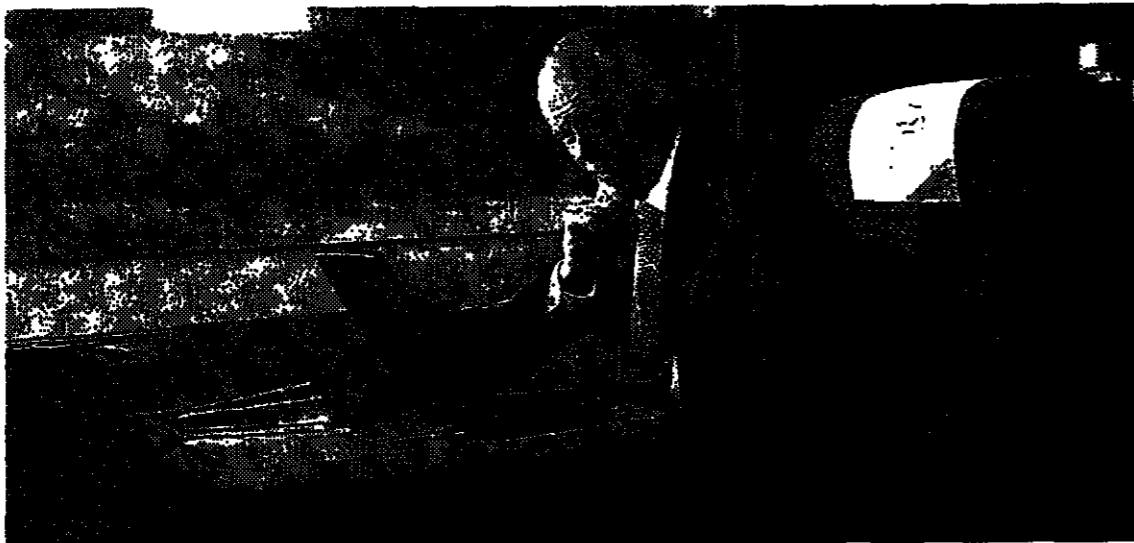
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Faulty hips: why Government delayed action

Health officials feared being sued by implants firm

Deputy Chief Medical Officer admits he was aware of new joint's high failure rate. **Ian Murray reports**

THE Government delayed issuing a warning about the failure rate of the 3M Capital hip replacement because it feared being sued by the makers, Jeremy Metters, the Deputy Chief Medical Officer, said yesterday.

Health Department officials were aware that some studies suggested two years ago that there was a high failure rate of the implant. A detailed report published last July in the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* showed that up to 26 per cent of the 76 patients treated at the Harlow Wood Orthopaedic Hospital in Nottingham had experienced early failures. Instead of lasting up to 20 years patients found the joint was failing after about two years.

Dr Metters said, however, that when officials went to the hospital they decided there was only anecdotal evidence of failures. "You can't make a judgment on the failure rate unless you have good hard evidence. It was only in January of this year that we got hard evidence that there was a problem of early failure with the 3M implant. If we were to have issued a warning without hard evidence, the manufacturers would have had a substantial case against us."

Dr Metters said he did not think the department would make an apology to patients affected. "If we had anything to apologise about we would apologise, but if there is good faith I don't think there is any need for an apology. If risks were taken I would apologise, but that was not the case."

He also felt there was little reason to think there would be any grounds for people to sue for compensation. "Effectively you would have to prove negligence and I don't think there is any evidence of bad faith," he said.

However, John Kitchingman, who runs the medico-legal department at Pannone and Partners, a Manchester firm of solicitors, said the legal case was clear. "This is going to cause a lot of pain and anxiety for those who are going to have to have their implant replaced," he said. "They may well have a claim for damages under the Consumer Protection Act 1987, in which case this would be on a

strict liability basis and there would be no need to prove negligence." Alexander Harris, a Cheshire firm of solicitors specialising in medico-legal claims, has put its pharmaceutical and product liability staff on alert for a rush of claims. David Harris, the partner in charge of the department, believes damages can be substantial if there has been any long-term damage.

"Admission by the manufacturers that the implants are faulty will certainly ease the litigation process in that recalling a patient for replacement will be tantamount to an admission of liability," he said. Just how many patients might have a case is unclear. Up to 4,700 of the implants were marketed to about 100 hospitals in Britain and 400 others sold abroad, mostly to

Commonwealth countries. Hospitals which bought them are still trying to find out how many remain in stock, but most are thought to have been used.

It is unlikely that all of those who were given the 3M implant will need to have them replaced. Elderly people who have not been very active since the operation will not have had much wear on the joint, which will remain in good condition. Some patients may be too frail for a major operation of this kind to be justified.

Doctors will have to decide, after clinical examination and the study of X-rays, who will need to have another replacement. The rest will need to be monitored carefully at regular intervals so that if the joint shows signs of failure it can be speedily rectified.



Former pilot left with sailor's rolling gait

By HELEN RUMBELOW

A FORMER RAF pilot now walks with a "sailor's gait" because of a faulty 3M hip replacement. Robert Price says that his right leg has shrunk by an inch because the new hip eroded bone.

He had his operation in 1995 at Scarborough and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust, which used the faulty joints in a quarter of its hip replace-

ment operations between 1993 and 1996.

Mr Price, 69, from Malton, in Yorkshire, was one of 146 unlucky ones. He said: "Before the operation, they said they would use a particular type of hip, and gave me a sheet of paper explaining the theory that the bone and the glue would grow together. You just take them on trust, they're the bosses."

Soon after the operation, he

was experiencing a nagging discomfort and pain as he got in and out of cars and baths. His left hip had already been replaced in 1986, and is still working well, which increased his disappointment with the new one.

"Right from the beginning it was never quite as good as the other one. And now I walk with a sailor's gait," he said.

"Because I walk badly, I get very tired, and it requires much more strength of mind to keep going. It's not for me to cast blame on 3M, but when I get another one, I shall be happy."

Scarborough and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust was alerted to the problem by the article in *The Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* showing that Harlow Wood Hospital in Nottingham had experienced a 40 per cent failure rate with the 3M joint, said a spokeswoman.

It started a recall service last November. So far, 110 of the 146 have been asked back to the hospital. Mr Price's doctor recalled him last December. The faulty hip will be replaced in a fortnight.

Hospitals hold the key

ONLY those patients who underwent a hip replacement operation between August 1, 1991, and March 31, 1997, could have been given one of the 3M implants (Ian Murray writes).

Most will not know which of the 70 types of prosthesis on the market was used: only the orthopaedic surgeon who carried out the operation will know and the notes on each case are kept in the hospital.

Staff are going through the records to identify those who received one of the suspect hips. They will be sent a letter

asking them to go for an examination, which will include an X-ray, to see if their implant is showing signs of failure. Patients who have moved since their operation should contact the hospital, giving their new address so that they can be recalled.

There are no plans to send letters out to all of the 250,000 people who received replacement hips over the period, but anyone who is worried can telephone the Health Department helpline on 0800 665544 or the 3M helpline on 01509 613038.

Call to tighten checks on devices

THE Government is looking into better ways to monitor medical devices put on to the market, after the discovery of the 3M hip's failure rate.

The company is one of the most respected in the field and had carried out extensive testing before putting its hip on the market in 1991. However, no licence or registration was needed because existing rules mean that medical devices can be sold without any proof that they work. Companies rely on their reputation to attract customers.

Just what has gone wrong remains a mystery: 3M and the Medical Devices Agency are both carrying out extensive tests now to try to find out. X-rays on patients with failed joints have shown that the replacement demineralises the bone, softening it at the upper end of the femur where the shaft of the implant is inserted. This loosens the joint and

Ian Murray on the lack of tests on new medical equipment

makes it liable to fracture. Nick Rawling, the company's sales and marketing manager, said: "Out of nearly 100 centres supplied with this implant, we have been notified of five where it is showing high failure rates. We are now carrying out a full clinical study. At present, we just do not know the answer."

He said that all implants had a certain life expectancy and known failure rate. The 3M hip had been well within the Government's own standard guidelines for failures, even including the figures from the centres where the rate was now

said to be too high. From June, all medical devices on the market must be approved for registration under an EU directive. The new system is clearly not foolproof. The 3M hip had passed the necessary tests for this in 1995, and was given approval for use in the EC.

Jeremy Metters, the deputy chief medical officer, said that the Government would have to look at better ways to monitor implants with some kind of national register, especially of orthopaedic implants.

The register will not change the fact that doctors can fit any device they believe will benefit a patient. A Health Department spokesman said: "A surgeon can use any implant he likes. There is nothing to stop them doing anything other than fear of litigation. They should seek the patient's consent first, but it is not obligatory."

Watch for warning signs to minimise damage

Doctors are being urged to watch for warning signs to minimise damage to the hip joint. The new system is clearly not foolproof. The 3M hip had passed the necessary tests for this in 1995, and was given approval for use in the EC.

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Ofsted accuses lazy suburban primary schools

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

STANDARDS are too low at a third of primary schools in the "leafy suburbs", inspectors said yesterday.

Ofsted, the schools inspection agency, said there was "nowhere to hide" after it produced the first national comparisons of schools with others serving similar catchment areas. Head teachers will be sent the information to help them to set targets for improvement. But they are not obliged to tell parents or even governors how their schools compare.

The information was produced after concern from ministers that many schools in middle-class areas were "coasting" while those at the bottom of league tables were struggling to cope with social and economic problems.

All 24,000 schools in England have been placed in one of five groups based on the number of pupils receiving free school meals, an indicator of family poverty.

Thirty-one per cent of primary schools with "well below average" free meals (fewer than 5 per cent of pupils) have been told by inspectors to raise standards of pupils' achievement. Just under half those

with "broadly average" free meals, serving a mixed social area, needed to raise standards, as did 76 per cent of those with the most free meals (more than half of pupils).

Ofsted said the poverty indicator was not meant to excuse poor performance. Rather, the under-achievers should learn from the 24 per cent of schools with the most free meals which had good or very good standards.

Mike Tomlinson, director of inspection at Ofsted, said: "It is not only important for schools in difficult circumstances to compare their performance, it is also important for schools in better circumstances. A like-for-like comparison will show those in the leafy suburbs which are not doing as well as they should."

It was up to heads to share the information with parents.

The Performance and Assessment (Panda) reports for each school reiterate the view of Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, that "it is important that pupils' backgrounds are not taken as an excuse for low expectations about their achievement". But it acknowledges "a correlation between the background of

pupils attending a school and pupils' attainments".

The Pandas set a school's performance against averages for truancy, pupils with English as a second language, inspection grades in various categories and results in national curriculum tests.

These show that, among secondary schools, 45 per cent of comprehensives, 60 per cent of secondary moderns and 6 per cent of grammars need to raise standards.

Pupils' progress in information technology is unsatisfactory in 27 per cent of secondary schools, the worst rating for any subject. It is followed by religious education (unsatisfactory in 20 per cent of secondary schools), music (14 per cent), design and technology (12 per cent) and modern languages (11 per cent).

Each school will be given economic and social statistics about its catchment area, including the proportion of adults with degrees and the number of children in overcrowded homes. Inspectors said this would be useful in deciding the need for homework clubs.

Education, page 43



Hats off to jazz: Johnny Dankworth playing the saxophone while Tom Pendry, MP, chairman of the all-party jazz group, awaits contributions

Band-leader is serious about jazz

By DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

THE band-leader Johnny Dankworth yesterday launched a campaign for jazz to be taken seriously.

The Jazz Development Trust wants jazz on the national curriculum in schools, a national jazz orchestra, jazz centres across the country, and jazz archives to be made accessible.

The trust had been a dream for many years, said Mr Dankworth, 70, a saxophonist and composer, who founded the Wavendon jazz centre at Milton Keynes with his wife, Dame Cleo Laine, in 1960.

Compared with other forms of music, jazz in Britain had always existed at a subsistence level, he said. "The word jazz has become part of the language, perfume is named after jazz and every other commercial uses jazz in the background. But jazz musicians earn a pittance."

Chris Hodgkins, director of Jazz Services, which provides

information about jazz, said jazz needed more funding. About £8 of public subsidy was spent on opera-goers compared with 8p on jazz audiences. "That's a shabby way to treat 3 million taxpayers and the jazz industry."

The trust has been given a three-year grant from the Foundation for Sport and the Arts, as well as support from the Arts Council.

Humphrey Lyttleton, another band-leader, said some of the most talented jazz artists were suffering because jazz did not receive the funding it deserved. There was no shortage of venues but musicians needed money to finance tours. They also needed money to hire recording studios. The creativity of musicians was being stifled.

The pianist Julian Joseph, 30, welcomed the trust. "We are suffering from a lack of follow-through. This is where I believe the trust comes in."

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US firm sweeps Come Dancing team off its feet

By RUTH GLEDHILL

AN AMERICAN cable television company is poised to wait in and capture the viewers of Britain's *Come Dancing* as the show's future hangs in the balance at the BBC - even though 4.5 million viewers switched on for the most recent programme.

Nostalgia television, of Washington, has signed up *Come Dancing's* Andy Ross and his 30-piece orchestra to record their own strict-tempo dance music at a studio in Wembley today. The music will be used as a soundtrack for American dance competitions, so they can be sold for broadcasting around the world.

In its 1970s heyday, ten million viewers tuned in to *Come Dancing* - created by Eric Morley and the world's longest running live-music television show. But as audiences plummeted and as programmes scheduled later and later in the night, *Come Dancing* was cut to one show a year.

Cy Payne, who has arranged the music for 25 years, said: "If it doesn't go

ahead this year it would be a great pity because it will be the fiftieth year." Simon Betts, the producer, said: "The future of the show is still in negotiation. We are fighting very hard for *Come Dancing*. We have a very loyal audience."

Nostalgia has up to seven million viewers of dance programmes such as last year's *United States Open*, won by England's Marcus and Karen Hilton.

But problems with copyright on recorded music mean that it has so far been unable to sell the programmes abroad. Andy Ross and his orchestra have been commissioned to write, orchestrate and produce music to allow Nostalgia to sell the programmes worldwide.

Dennis Rogers, President of DanceSport America, said: "There is a tremendous demand for dance sport on television around the world. More people in Germany will turn on to watch Marcus and Karen Hilton dance than to watch their own Boris Becker."

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The heydays: *Come Dancing* competitors in 1969

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Male bastion held in contempt

Female advocates want to exchange
a little robing-up modesty for benefit
in court, reports Frances Gibb

CALLS for advocates' robing rooms to be made unisex, so abolishing the last male preserve at the Bar, are causing the biggest stir since women barristers were permitted to wear trousers.

Some barristers are demanding that each of the robing rooms at the Royal Courts of Justice in London, which provide lockers and changing facilities for 650 barristers, be shared by men and women.

Women who support the change argue that they are disadvantaged because they are excluded from the last-minute exchanges between opposing sides as counsel "robe up" before a case. But others dismiss the claims as "pathetic" and point to the disadvantages of having to undress, sometimes down to their underwear, with men in the room.

There are three robing rooms for men and one for women at the Royal Courts of Justice. They have tables and chairs, drink-making facilities and lavatories. It costs £120 a year to rent a locker.

Helen Mountfield, one of those pressing for change, said the segregation was a breach of the Sex Discrimination Act. "There should be equally favourable facilities for men and women. In most courts there are mixed robing rooms. It is not that rude: all you usually change is your robe and collar."

The issue was not a huge one, she admitted, but represented one of the "small incremental social exclusions" for women at the Bar.

Other female advocates were firmly against mixed robing. Elizabeth Gloster, QC, said complaints about missing out on last-minute discussions were unreal and pathetic.

"If I have to take my shirt off, I don't particularly want to go into the loo to do it." Nor, she added, would she wish to put her make-up on in front of male colleagues.

Camilla Bingham, a junior barrister, agreed: "Apart from



"Gazing at hairy chests" would be one of the few boons of unisex robing rooms for Camilla Bingham, a junior barrister

the practice of "robing-rooming", in which you locate your opponent and try to bully them into submission by impressing them with the merits of your case... and gazing at hairy chests, I can't see the advantages."

Many robing rooms are mixed. Paul Shrubbsall, senior clerk at One Essex Court, said he recalled an occasion when the House of Lords robing room was "full of top silks and one woman barrister stripped off to her bra. You could have heard a pin drop."

The heated issue has been taken to the Bar Council services and information technology committee. Oweh Davies, committee vice-chairman, said: "There was universal support for the prin-

ciple of unisex robing rooms but we intend to have a comprehensive review of the facilities generally for barristers."

He was dismissive of objections such as the cost of changing the lavatories. "Plumbing is always raised as an excuse. It was done at my college at Cambridge, Magdalene," Cherie Booth, QC, a committee member, said she had no strong view on the matter. "I usually put my robes on in court anyway," she said.

Don Leach, a former senior court official who runs the robing rooms, said: "The extraordinary thing is that a few years ago, women QCs insisted on having their own separate facilities."

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BEST CUSTOMER CARE? THAT'LL BE THE DAEWOO

Homes find a buyer in average of 11 weeks

BY EMIMA WILKINS

HOMES are taking an average of 11 weeks to sell, according to a new survey. The fastest-selling area is Alton, Hampshire, where houses sell in two weeks on average.

At the bottom of the league are Stockport, Derby and St Austell, where it takes an average of 20 weeks to find a buyer.

Demand for homes remains strong, with sales at their fastest since Black Horse Agencies first compiled the survey in August 1995. The estate agency chain said the average sales time is three weeks shorter than a year earlier.

The region with the fastest rate of sales is the South East, at seven weeks on average, while the North West is the slowest at 17 weeks.

The average price of a first-time property is up by £407 to £51,707. However, the Building Societies Association reported on Tuesday that gross home loans fell last month from December, pointing to a slight slowdown in the housing market recovery. The association said interest rate rises last year and a further reduction in mortgage interest relief in April had dampened house-price growth.

Ministry is worst landlord, says agency

BY ADAM BARNARD

THE Transport Department is Britain's most wasteful landlord, with a vacancy rate worse than that of the Ministry of Defence, according to the Empty Homes Agency.

Bob Lawrence, chief executive of the agency, blamed inefficient planning. "They buy houses in the path of projected roads and then change their minds and do not build the roads. But by then they have removed all the toilets and baths to keep out squatters, so the houses are impossible to let."

The agency's annual report puts the MoD's vacancy rate - 13,142 homes - at 30 per cent of its total stock, while the Transport Department's 6,000 empty homes is equivalent to 22 per cent.

A spokesman for the Highways Agency said: "We are not a housing authority but we have to sell these houses at market value. Over the last five years the roadbuilding programme has been curtailed and this has left us with a lot of surplus stock."

The report says that more than 100,000 council and housing association homes are standing empty and there are 250,000 long-standing vacancies in the private sector.

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Gardeners led up the wrong path

Michael Hornsby on a claim that watering and feeding plants is a waste of time

GARDENERS who lavish fertiliser and water on their plants are wasting their time and money, it was claimed yesterday. Many flowers and shrubs do just as well without ever being fed or watered. This challenge to the cherished beliefs of amateur horticulturalists who spend millions of pounds a year on garden products comes in *Gardening Which?* published by the Consumers' Association. "If you never feed or water your garden, you will save a lot of time and effort, and it is clear from a two-

year trial we have just completed that many of your plants will still thrive," the magazine declares. The trials were held at Capel Manor, North London, on three pairs of plots. One pair was treated with manufactured fertilisers, one with manure or other organic matter and one was not fed at all. All three were sparingly watered. Alastair Ayres, editor of the magazine, said: "We made sure that

all the plots had the same poor-quality soil, low in nutrients. What we found with a mixed bag of perennial flowers and shrubs is that they were likely to thrive just as well without any feeding. It is true that some might not grow as lushly or to such a large size. But that can be an advantage as it means there is room for a greater number of plants." Among plants which did well in the unfed soils, according to the maga-

zine, were lavender, Californian poppies, cosmos, hardy geraniums, potentillas, sedums, clarkias and echiums. "The garden plots that were left unfed were only really let down by their sparse, weedy lawns and pale, stunted tomato plants — feeding had tripled the weight of the crop in our other plots." It also appeared from the trials that organic fertilisers were better than manufactured ones for a

number of plants, including ornamental cabbages, wallflowers and Chilean glory vines. But Alan Titchmarsh, presenter of BBC's *Gardeners' World*, said: "It is hugely irresponsible to tell gardeners that they do not have to feed their gardens. It is an extremely hasty judgement to reach on the basis of a two-year trial on one patch of ground, with a small range of plants and shrubs, many of which

are adapted to poor soils anyway." Jon Pickering, of the Royal Horticultural Society, said: "Selective use of fertiliser at the right time of year is likely to result in the healthiest plants. If you do not want to bother feeding, choose slow growing plants which are naturally better suited to poorer soils." John Clowes, of the plant feed firm Miracle Garden Care, said: "Our customers are canny people and I do not think they would keep coming back if our products were not producing results."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Record asbestos damages

A businessman with asbestos-related lung disease had his damages raised to £749,795 — almost double the previous highest award for the condition. The Court of Appeal increased Bryan Ward's award from £440,167, made in 1996, after taking into account his loss of earnings.

Mr Ward, 48, of Bessacarr, Doncaster, was exposed to asbestos from 17 to 27 while with an insulation company. The damages could rise again if his condition worsens.

Suspect cleared

An Algerian man held by Scotland Yard for questioning by French police about serial killings in Paris was cleared of any link to the crimes but deported to France as an illegal immigrant.

Shell shock

A 42-year-old man from Newark who put a practice tank shell on his GP's reception counter, claiming it was a bomb and demanding attention, was jailed for 18 months at Nottingham Crown Court.

Churchill sale

More than £1.25 million has been paid for the country home that Winston Churchill gave to his son, Randolph. Stour House, a Georgian home in 15 acres at East Bergholt, Suffolk, went on sale two weeks ago.

Number's up

The Crimestoppers telephone number will be painted on the ceiling of every police cell in London to encourage criminals to pass information to officers. The number is 0800 555111.

Erasing the past

A man in Switzerland signing himself "The Little Robber" sent £5 to a W.H. Smith branch in Spalding, Lincolnshire, to pay for pencils, rulers and rubbers that he stole as an eight-year-old boy in 1971.

Mussolini's car

The Fiat 2800 Berlinetta in which Mussolini and his mistress tried to flee Italy in 1945 is to be auctioned in Geneva next month. The pair were ambushed and executed by a band of partisans.

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The way they were: the couple and the Anglia in the 1970s

A Ford Anglia, and hip couple's summer of love

By PAUL WILKINSON

THE early 1970s were a magical time for Steve King and his wife, Sue. They were summers of love, of loon pants, laffans, Soft Machine — and a blue, 1951 Ford Anglia. The couple did their courting in the car; it carried them to pop concerts and wild all-night parties. But it gave up the ghost on a trip from Mr King's home in East London to his girlfriend in South Yorkshire and was consigned to a scrapheap in Barnsley. Mr King reluctantly accepted £6 for it. Then last week, 26 years later, he saw the car sitting on a pile of rusted



The way they are: Steve and Sue King visiting their rediscovered Ford Anglia at the Barnsley scrapyard where he left it when it blew up in 1972

wrecks in the same scrapyard and bought it back, for £6. He plans to give it to his wife — they were married in 1973 — as a silver wedding present. Mr King said: "I was amazed it was still there after all this time." He had seen the car while driving past the scrapyard back to his home: a lot of the others had been taken away, revealing the Anglia. "I looked a little closer and saw this familiar looking car. I couldn't believe my eyes and my heart began to race." Seeing the car brought back memories of the golden days of his youth. He had rescued it for a river from a scrapheap

near his home in Stepton when he was 17. "I was always tinkering with cars. I used to tinkle about in it all over London." He and Mrs King met when they were working at an hotel in Devon, he as a kitchen porter and she as a chambermaid. He had long wavy hair and wore loon pants, velvet jackets and dlogs; she wore laffans and embroidered jeans. Off duty, they would lounge on the beach and go swimming at midnight. Mrs King, 45, said: "We bumped into each other in the hotel staff canteen and we just hit it off. Steve fell for me immediately and after we became friends he sort of grew on me. We were young

and just went along with everything that was hip." They listened to the latest rock bands such as Jimi Hendrix, Soft Machine and Pink Floyd and went to see Hawkwind and Lindisfarne in concert. Mr King "roadied" for Hawkwind's support band and Mrs King befriended a guitarist with Showaddywaddy. The year after

the Anglia's engine blew up, the couple married and settled in South Yorkshire. Mr King, 46, who hopes to restore the Anglia, now drives an Audi coupé and runs a successful business as a shop designer. In the 1950s a new Ford Anglia cost about £500. Today, enthusiasts will pay up to £250 for an example needing

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Lib Dems seeking to capitalise on policy success

Polly Newton on Paddy Ashdown's plan to make the most of new-found influence over the Government

The Liberal Democrats have embarked on their most radical review of policy since their party was formed a decade ago.

Eight "commissions" have been set up to rethink the party's position on the economy, social security, home affairs, foreign affairs, health, education, the environment and the constitution. The five-member groups will report their conclusions by the end of July. The party leadership has ordered that the process be completed much more quickly than previous policy reviews, even though this one is more comprehensive.

The review is partly an attempt to build on the Liberal Democrats' successful co-operation with the Government on constitutional issues. It follows Labour's implementation of commitments made in the Liberal Democrat manifesto, such as the establishment of an independent central bank.

David Laws, head of policy for the Liberal Democrats, said yesterday: "It capitalises on the fact that we have got Labour to adopt a lot of our agenda... They are influenced by some of our thinking and we therefore have a

unique opportunity to get more Liberal Democrat thinking into the starting blocks."

The Liberal Democrats also hope to highlight what they claim is the Tories' lack of firm policies. Mr Laws said: "We want to move ahead so that we set the agenda for the next ten years, rather than looking backwards to the things that we have been promoting under the Tories. It is the Tories who have the real policy problem."

Each commission will be headed by the Liberal Democrats' senior parliamentary

Adverts blamed for Tory defeat

TORY activists have blamed the £13 million advertising campaign by M&C Saatchi for their general election defeat. In a report leaked to *Broadcast* magazine, party members said that the "demon eyes" and "weeping lion" themes failed to get the "good news" message across, and that the Tories had been outmanoeuvred by Labour's communications machine. One activist asked: "Where is our Peter Mandelson?"

spokesman for the relevant subject. However, Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, has given many of the party's new MPs a major role in the belief that they will be more radical in their thinking.

Mark Oaten, who took the Liberal Democrats' majority in Winchester from two votes to more than 21,000 in the by-election there in November, will be responsible for pulling together the commissions' reports into one volume for submission to the party's Federal Policy Committee. There will also be input from experts outside Parliament. Matthew Owen, who has worked closely with the Social Security Minister, Frank Field, on welfare reform proposals and who stood for the Liberal Democrats against John Major in Huntingdon at the general election, will sit on the social security commission.

Subject to the approval first of Liberal Democrat MPs then the party conference in the autumn, the results of the review will form a new manifesto for the series of elections being held next year, including those for the European Parliament, the Scottish par-



liament and the Welsh assembly.

Each commission will be given free rein within its own subject area but there are already some indications of the way the party is thinking. It will certainly not change its pro-European stance, although there will be greater acknowledgement in future that the institutions of Europe are not perfect and that there is room for reform. The Liberal Democrats are

also keen to establish themselves as the champions of civil liberties, so the home affairs commission is likely to underline the party's opposition to national identity cards. The commission on the economy is expected to crystallise some of Mr Ashdown's ideas on the need for a "contract" between taxpayers and the Government. It will consider the case for more earmarking, or hypothecation, of taxes, so that voters

know exactly how their money is being spent.

The policy review begins as the Liberal Democrats prepare for their spring conference in Southport. Delegates will be asked to approve the policy of "constructive opposition" adopted by Mr Ashdown since the election. Although there will be some dissent from activists in areas where Labour is the main opposition, the policy is expected to be endorsed.

Dobson accepts the blame for waiting list rise

By Jill Sherman, Chief Political Correspondent

TONY BLAIR came under further pressure yesterday to provide extra funds for the National Health Service after the Government confirmed that waiting lists had risen by 100,000 since Labour came to power.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, immediately shouldered the blame for the increase, claiming that he had decided that his first priority when he came into government was to stave off a winter crisis. Just over half the increase (54,000) occurred during the last quarter and 1,262,000 are now waiting for treatment.

"I am embarrassed," Mr Dobson said. "There's no point in me pretending that these are not bad figures. I have got to take some responsibility for it because I am not going to pretend that I am not party responsible."

"From the moment we took office, we made clear the top priority for the NHS was to avoid a winter crisis, even if this meant that waiting lists would rise."

The Government had found an additional £300 million for the NHS this winter, which had been spent on 1,500 projects. But he insisted that the Government would keep its promise to reduce hospital waiting lists by 100,000 during this Parliament.

been waiting for treatment for longer than the 18-month Patient's Charter guarantee.

Mr Dobson promised that the waiting list total would start to go down in March and said that nobody should have to wait for more than 18 months for treatment. The rise in numbers over the winter was in part predictable, because hospitals were handling more emergency cases.

The Government had set up a "wide-ranging action plan to tackle NHS waiting lists and times". Mr Dobson said, including a "Waiting List Action Team" supported by eight regional taskforces, channeling £5 million into devising new ways of cutting waiting lists. But he argued that waiting list figures were "like a supertanker — they take time to slow down, before bringing them to a halt and turning them around."

Mr Dobson is believed to be pressing the Prime Minister to agree to a one-off bonus of between £1.5 billion to £2 billion for the NHS in July, to mark the service's 50th anniversary. The waiting list figures will only help his case for higher spending.

Yesterday MPs and ministers privately argued that the Government had to fulfil its manifesto promise to reduce waiting lists and this would mean pumping more money into the system.

Leading article, page 21

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Electoral reform risks extending party power

A MAJOR beneficiary of electoral reform may be the parties rather than the public. At the same time as ministers proclaim their desire to decentralise power and give voters a wider choice, they are ensuring that party head offices strengthen their control.

That is the heart of an apparently arcane debate over electoral systems that surfaced yesterday at the Government's joint Cabinet committee with the Liberal Democrats. It will be raised next week in the Commons during the committee stage of the Bill bringing in proportional representation for next year's elections to the European Parliament.

Under the Bill, Euro-MPs will be elected in large regional constituencies in proportion to the share of votes cast for a party list of candidates, with those at the top being elected first. But should voters only be allowed to choose which party to support and be forced to accept the list of candidates in the order presented by the parties? This is the closed-list system used by most big European countries and adopted for the additional members being elected to the Scottish parliament and Welsh assembly. This gives power to the party organisations to determine which candidates are most likely to be elected. It is an either/or choice for voters.

The Liberal Democrats and constitutional reform groups such as Charter 88 have

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

pressed the alternative of the open-list ballot, used in Belgium and Denmark, under which voters have a choice of backing either a party's entire list or an individual candidate. Each vote for a candidate counts for the party and a strongly supported candidate stands a better chance of being elected. This system allows voters to express a preference between candidates.

To test what might happen under the two systems, the State of the Nation project, backed by the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust, commissioned a poll by ICM of 1,130 people this month. The distribution of parties would be identical under both systems, with Labour winning 49 out of 84 seats on the basis of 53 per cent of the vote. However, on the open-list ballot, two out of five voters chose to support individual candidates, while three out of five backed a whole party slate. Much would depend on how far the parties pick well known candidates, as happens on the Continent. Almost one in five Labour supporters backed Glynis Kinnock. The public is broadly evenly divided between the two systems, though the middle classes, who are more likely to vote in the Euro-elections, prefer open lists by a near three-to-two margin.

The clinching argument is the methods chosen by the parties for selecting candidates for the lists. The Tories have opted for a cumbersome, but democratic, procedure of allowing members to pick candidates at regional meetings, while the Liberal Democrats will use one member one vote ballots with a special provision, known as zipping, to ensure that men and women have equal prominence on the final list. Labour prefers democratic centralism since Millbank Tower will control the lists, an option favoured by less than a quarter of those asked. Labour's organisers want to determine which candidates are selected and the order in which they are likely to be elected.

While Labour officials clearly prefer a closed-list system, Jack Straw has said he is prepared to consider the Lib Dem alternative. He has repeated this week that he wants to hear the debate in the committee stage before taking a firm view. Alan Beith, the Lib Dem home affairs spokesman, believes that the door is still ajar — and, whatever happens in the Commons, the issue is certain to be reopened in the Lords. At stake is the balance between party bureaucracies and voters and the scope for independent-minded MPs to be elected. Open lists might even boost the low turnout at Euro-elections.

PETER RIDDELL

Day boy Younger becomes a boarder

By James Landale, Political Reporter

A TORY life peer will take the rare step next week of joining the endangered ranks of the hereditary peerage.

In a ceremony on Monday the former Defence Secretary Lord Younger of Preswick will become the 4th Viscount Younger of Leckie, a title inherited from his father, who died last year. Officials believe that Lord Younger is only the second peer to switch, in the vernacular of the House, from being a "day boy" to being a "boarder".

The former MP for Ayr was created a life peer by John Major after he stood down from the Commons in 1992 to concentrate on his business career. Labour is intent on expelling hereditary peers from the House, but Lord Younger has been assured that in that event he can revert to sitting as a life peer.

Peers with more than one title are obliged to sit in the Lords on the basis of whichever one is superior. The only



Younger: joining the hereditary peerage

other peer with a similar experience is the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, a former Tory, Defence Minister. He was created a life peer, with title of Lord Bahnel, after losing his Commons seat in 1974 but inherited his present title a year later.

Lord Younger has taken so long to adopt his new status because of the strict rules imposed by the House. Producing his father's marriage and death certificates and his own birth certificate was not enough. "They said they wanted to have a witness of my birth to prove that I hadn't been smuggled in with a bed pan," he said. "As you can imagine this posed a bit of a problem."

Eventually a sworn statement from his sister in Australia supporting his claim to the title was accepted.

Lib Dems face PR row with Labour

By Andrew Pierce

A GROUP of 50 Labour MPs has been formed with ministerial backing to campaign for the retention of the constituency link in any system of electoral reform for the House of Commons.

The establishment of the Keep the Link Group, which rejects the proportional representation system advocated by the Liberal Democrats, will threaten co-operation between the two parties on constitutional reform.

The group's first meeting will be addressed by Peter Hain, a Welsh Office Minister, at Westminster next month. He will address the meeting in a personal capacity but his presence will be seen as a sign of Downing Street's tacit support.

The group is backing the alternative vote (AV) system. This would retain single-member constituencies but allow the public to place candidates in order of preference. Most Liberal Democrats oppose the AV system.

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Postman loses court fight with 100lb rottweiler

A POSTMAN'S worst fears seemed to be coming true when he was confronted on his rounds by a 100 lb rottweiler, the Court of Appeal was told yesterday. He had no way of knowing that the giant family pet named Boots simply wanted to play.

Equally, Boots had no idea that the postman, Anil Chauhan, did not want to play. So when Mr Chauhan turned and fled, Boots chased him for 100 yards until he fell over.

Mr Chauhan was so angry that he sued the bitch's owners and accused Boots of having "a vicious and mischievous nature".

However, two judges yesterday cleared the pet's reputation. The dog might be intimidating, but it was basically "friendly, albeit sometimes boisterous", they said. The owner, Ian Paul of Denham, Middlesex, could not have expected the pet to behave as it did and so they could not be held liable for any injury caused.

Boots was taken in by the Paul family from an animal refuge and had been described as a gentle giant who acted like the Winnie the Pooh character Tigger, who liked to "bounce" around.

Giving judgment, Mr Justice Wall said he had "every sympathy" for Mr Chauhan: "If I am approached at speed by a large dog whose inten-

Judges clear 'bouncy' pet which chased man 100 yards because it just wanted to play

tions may (unbeknown to me) be friendly; if as a consequence I take the reasonable decision to remove myself from the scene as soon as possible; and if, in the process of running away, I am chased by the dog and injure myself by falling over or having a heart attack, on these facts the damage I suffer is, in my judgment, caused by the dog."

It was not the owner's liability, however, if the behaviour could not have been foreseen.

Mr Chauhan was doing his rounds on his moped when he called to deliver letters at the Paul house in August 1992. Confronted by Boots, he abandoned his moped and took to his heels.

At Uxbridge County Court in December 1996, his hopes of winning compensation fell when the court ruled that the dog was not dangerous at all, and in all likelihood was most

likely trying to run up and play. Four other postmen who delivered letters to the Pauls had testified to Boots' playful nature.

One of the character witnesses said: "I do not believe that Boots would attack or bite anybody."

The Appeal Court upheld the verdict. Lord Justice Hirst described the original decision as "unassailable". There was no evidence that Mr Paul or his wife had any knowledge that Boots had "a propensity to chase".

Mr Chauhan could not have been expected to know Boots' intentions were friendly when it chased him for 100 yards, nor could its behaviour have been foreseen by Mr Paul.

Mr Justice Wall agreed. Boots was "friendly, albeit sometimes boisterous" and it was accepted it could be "intimidating".

The judge added: "That, no doubt, was why she was kept."



Crufts debutante ain't nothing but a hound dog

BY HELEN RUMBELOW

A NEW deb was launched in the aristocratic dog season at Crufts yesterday—only to be sniffily ignored by a team of impeccably mannered whippets.

Bassbar Allez France, a grand basset griffon vendeens known as Ali, will compete for the first time in a hounds class at Crufts on March 5. At the preview, however, the 12-week-old puppy from this ancient French hunting breed had to sit and watch as the whippets trotted and leapt.

The 14-strong Whippet Club Obedience Team will be back at the show after a two-year absence to settle old scores with border collies, sheepdogs and German shepherds, Sharon Ireland, the team's organiser, said.

"Everyone makes fun of whippets. Their image is of being silly shivering dogs from the North, but they can do anything a collie can and more," Ms Ireland said. "They can't be brainwashed

into obedience like other dogs, they won't go out of the door if there's a sniff of rain and they like nothing more than acting as hot water bottle under the duvet."

The whippet team proved her point yesterday, effortlessly jumping through hoops and retrieving fluffy toys to the admiration of passing mongrels.

Grand basset griffon vendeens such as Ali have been available in Britain since 1990, but the Kennel Club waited to allow the breed to compete at Crufts to avoid the fate that befell the shar-pei, the wrinkly-faced dog that became a fashion craze in the 1970s.

"The demand for shar-peis led to unscrupulous businessmen breeding anything for anyone," a Kennel Club spokesman said. "That's why we wait these days before allowing them a breeding class, in order to give new breeds a low profile and let the numbers increase."

Minister urges pub ban for drunks

BY RICHARD FORD HOME CORRESPONDENT

HABITUAL drunks will be barred from pubs and their identities circulated among licensees under a government drive to curb public drunkenness.

Magistrates already have the power to ban unruly drinkers, but few such orders are made. Announcing the campaign against violent drunk behaviour, George Howarth, a junior Home Office Minister, yesterday urged the authorities to get tough.

Beer mugs made of toughened glass are to be introduced in pubs and clubs over the next two years in an attempt to cut the number of people injured in violent incidents on or near licensed premises.

About 13,000 violent incidents take place in or around public houses in England and Wales each year. "I want our towns and cities to be safe for everyone to enjoy," Mr Howarth said.

He told councils, the police and magistrates to utilise the 1902 Licensing Act which makes it an offence for habitual drunks to buy alcohol or for anyone to buy it on their behalf.

In York, the measures have been used against anyone convicted for drunkenness three times in a year. Magistrates can ban them from buying alcohol in any pub, club, shop or off-licence in York for three years. The offender's photograph is circulated to licensed premises. Offenders who breach the ban can be fined up to £200 and licensees that sell them alcohol face a fine of up to £500.

No inside track for the solo drivers

BY PAUL WILKINSON

SOLITARY drivers in Leeds are being reeducated this week that their days are numbered. Council officials began handing out more than 15,000 leaflets warning that motorists face a £20 penalty if they use a planted car-share lane without a passenger.

The "high occupancy vehicle lane", starting in April on a mile-long section of the inner lane of the A647, is the first scheme on an urban route in Europe, although a ten-mile stretch of trunk road near Madrid has had a restricted lane since 1995.

Only cars with more than one occupant, and buses, will be allowed to use the lane during rush hours. The plan is to encourage car-sharing and reduce the overall amount of traffic using the busy route into the centre from the western outskirts.

A Leeds spokesman said: "On average, 2,000 vehicles carry 3,645 people during the morning peak. If even a small number of single motorists can be persuaded to share, all motorists will benefit."

Motorcycle police will monitor the lane. Bylaws permit the use of fixed-penalty tickets or a maximum fine of £200 if the case goes to court. Researchers will monitor changes in traffic flow and air quality in the scheme, costing £480,000 from Leeds and £120,000 from European funds.

Similar lanes in America have suffered from a shift of jobs out of city centres and into suburbs. A California scheme allows single drivers to use the lanes for a toll, usually little more than £1.50.

Church campaign on Diana grief

BY RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

CHURCHES are planning an Easter advertising campaign based on the spiritual longing that was evoked by the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

A poster campaign starting this weekend will feature banks of floral tributes, cutty toys and handwritten messages similar to the bouquets piled up at Kensington Palace. The slogan says: "If all this started you thinking, carry on at church this Easter."

The idea comes from the churches' advertising network, a group of clergy and advertising specialists from the main denominations. The Rev Robert Ellis, the Anglican clergyman heading the campaign, said: "The image will be familiar to many and was a

feature of shrines set up after major national disasters such as Hillsborough, Dunblane, Lockerbie, Zebrugg, the death of Princess Diana, many funerals and the increasing number set up where fatal road accidents have occurred.

"Another person's death reminds us of our own mortality. Quite often, emotions hidden for years come to the surface."

Religious communities worldwide are to be invited to influence the thinking of the World Bank in development studies. Dr George Carey, and James Wolfensohn, President of the Bank, pledged their cooperation in a joint statement after meeting at Lambeth Palace.

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Arthur Titherington, one of 100 out of 523 to survive cruel regime

Weeping PoW calls for recompense by Japan

British 'slave' says last month's apology to Tony Blair was not good enough, reports Robert Whyman in Tokyo

A FORMER prisoner of war wept in a Tokyo courtroom yesterday as he relived the horrors of a Japanese labour camp, and said the apology given by Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister, to Tony Blair last month was totally inadequate as an act of atonement.

"Our lives were threatened every minute of every day," said Arthur Titherington, chairman of the Japanese Labour Camps Survivors Association, describing his nightmarish experiences as a slave labourer for the Japanese Imperial Army in a Formosan copper mine.

Mr Titherington was giving evidence in the final hearing of a lawsuit brought by military and civilian veterans from Britain, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. They are all demanding an official apology and compensation — from the Japanese Government.

The case has been watched closely by Japanese officials, who are worried about any potential repercussions on the planned visit by Emperor Akihito to Britain in May.

In a voice choking with emo-

tion, Mr Titherington told how many of his comrades in the camp died at the hands of guards who meted out savage beatings with bamboo sticks, rifle butts and hammers. "Beatings could take place at any time for any reason," he said, wiping away tears. "The guards said they had the ability and the right to kill us at any time for any reason."

Out of 523 prisoners forced to work in the same copper mine, he was one of only 100 people who survived the fearsome regime of beatings and starvation.

Mr Titherington, whose association claims some 10,000 former POWs as members, accused the Japanese Government of dragging its feet over the compensation issue until the veterans are all dead. "Japanese politicians sit in the Diet and watch us die out," he told the Tokyo District Court. Last month Mr Hashimoto offered an official apology during a meeting with Mr Blair, and promised to pay for the grandchildren of British POWs to study in Japan, and to help to finance veterans' visits to battlefields and cemeteries.

The veterans' chances of winning their three-year court battle — one of nearly 30 compensation cases brought by victims of the Japanese Imperial Army — are regarded as slight. Japan maintains that all claims were settled at government level in 1951 under the San Francisco peace agreements.

Lawyers for the Allied POWs have countered by calling international legal experts who argued in earlier hearings that the 1907 Hague Convention gives individual POWs the right to seek compensation for ill-treatment in captivity.

Last month Mr Titherington gave a warning that unless their demands were met his members would take to the streets in protest during Emperor Akihito's visit.

But at a press conference in Tokyo yesterday he was more circumspect. "We don't have anything specifically planned. We were waiting until we got some indication of how [the hearing] today turned out."

He added: "We may somehow have to let Emperor Akihito know of our displeasure. Quite how I don't know yet."

Widow is awarded jackpot of \$21m

Boston: A widow, 72, has been declared the winner of a \$21 million (£13 million) jackpot, even though the ticket was in the possession of a shopowner who insists he bought it. "I think that's just wonderful," said Paraskeve Kantages who called the shopkeeper's story a "Greek mythology".

Mrs Kantages phoned in her lucky numbers, 4-6-10-19-25, which she has been playing every week since 1991, to the shop, but a snowstorm prevented her from going out and collecting her ticket.

When she won the jackpot, she went to the shop to pick up the ticket but the owner Nick Haven would not give it to her. He claimed she had phoned again to cancel the purchase and he had bought it.

Joe Malone, the state treasurer, dismissed Mr Haven's claim as "outrageous". Mrs Kantages will, however, have to wait before collecting any money, which will be paid only after a hearing. (AP)

WORLD IN BRIEF

North Korea raises hopes for peace

Seoul: In an important policy change that could bring peace to the divided Korean peninsula, North Korea said it was willing to talk to the new South Korean Government to be installed next week. The official Korean Central News Agency said Pyongyang's Communist Government was ready to end an era of confrontation with its southern neighbour.

"The North and the South must promote coexistence, co-prosperity, common interests, mutual collaboration and unity between fellow countrymen," Kim Yong Sun, a leading North Korean policymaker, said. In Seoul, President-elect Kim Dae Jung's party, the National Congress for New Politics, welcomed the move. North and South fought from 1950 to 1953 in a war that ended in an armistice without a lasting peace treaty. (AP)

Japanese MP hangs himself

Tokyo: A Japanese politician suspected of illegal stock dealings was found hanging at a hotel hours before parliament was due to vote to strip him of immunity from arrest (Robert Whyman writes). Shokei Arai, 50, a ruling Liberal Democratic Party MP, was the fourth public official tainted by corruption to commit suicide this year. He was to be arrested on suspicion of demanding that a securities company guarantee profits on his investments. The law prohibits such guaranteed payoffs.

Briton beaten up in Kashmir

Srinagar: A British tourist and a Belgian traveller have been taken to hospital after being attacked by Indian paramilitary troops in Kashmir. The students were struck with rifle butts after they tried to climb a hilllock on the banks of the picturesque Dal Lake in Srinagar, police said. The state government is trying to revive Kashmir's tourism industry, shattered by a Muslim separatist campaign and the abduction of foreigners. (AFP)

Three Mir spacemen return

Moscow: Two Russians and a Frenchman left the Mir and endured a rough landing on the snow-covered steppes of central Kazakhstan on the 12th anniversary of the space station's launch. Cosmonauts Anatoli Solovoy and Pavel Vinogradov and French astronaut Léopold Eyharts, right, were buffeted about in their Soyuz space capsule as they touched down after a three-hour descent from Mir, 250 miles above Earth. Tass reported. (AP)



Le Pen assault trial begins

Paris: Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of France's extreme-right National Front, went on trial in Versailles charged with physically attacking, among others, Annette Poulvast-Bergeal, a Socialist MP, during last year's election campaign (Ben Macintyre writes). M. Le Pen, 70 this year, has been charged with "violence and public injury" and faces up to three years in jail and a possible Fr300,000 (£30,000) fine if convicted.

Villages bury 140 boat victims

Freetown: About 140 bodies have been buried in Sierra Leone fishing villages around Conary Dee after a boat helping people to flee fighting capsized. Another 60 people are thought to have died. On the Guinea border, three officers of the toppled junta, including Colonel Samuel Williams, the Chief of Army Staff, have been arrested and are "awaiting repatriation". (AFP)

Everest hero on the mend

Wellington: Sir Edmund Hillary, left, the first man to conquer Mt Everest, will go home this weekend after spending two weeks in Christchurch Hospital recovering from a bout of pneumonia and back injury (Cathie Bell writes). Sir Edmund, 78, had been taken to the hospital's intensive-care unit after becoming ill on the Antarctic cruise ship *Marco Polo*. He said he would probably take it easy and cut out overseas trips for a while, but would not yet retire.


Male revivalists short of cash

Washington: Promise Keepers, the men-only revivalist movement that has been urging men to take charge of their families, will lay off all its 345 staff after March 31 due to a financial crisis. The decision comes four months after the group brought hundreds of thousands of men to Washington for possibly the largest religious gathering held in America. (Reuters)

Offenders brought to book


Madrid: Youths caught driving scooters recklessly in Benalmadena in southern Spain can opt to pay a traditional fine or promise to read a book provided by the library. They will have 30 days to read it, then answer questions on its content. The chief librarian decides if the sentence has been properly served. (AFP)

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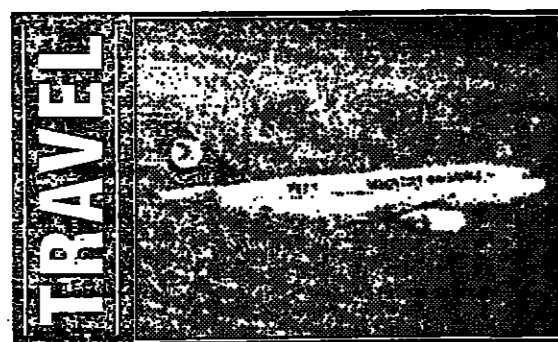
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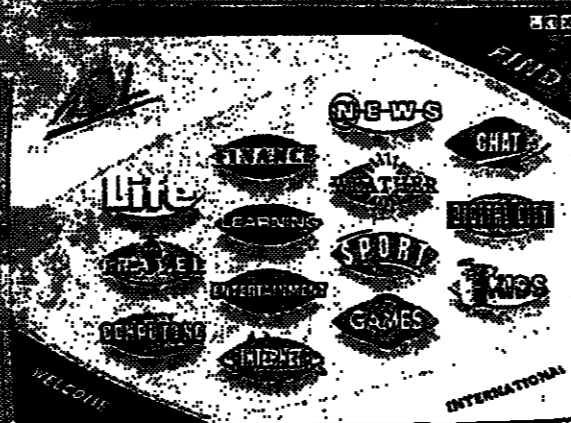
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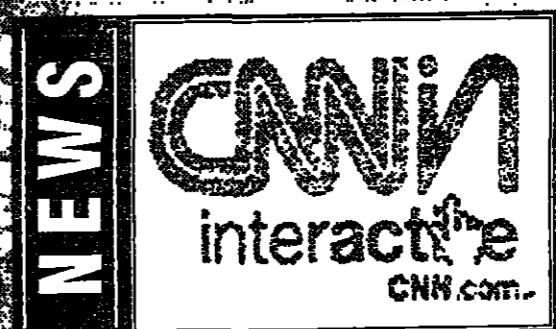
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German men's sex drive slips into low gear

GERMAN males are losing interest in sex, according to academic researchers reporting to the German congress of psychotherapists in Berlin. The news emerged, ironically, on Weiberfastnacht, the day of the carnival season when women in Catholic regions traditionally snip off the ties of their colleagues and bosses in a castration ritual.

Roger Boyes reports on an alarming loss of libido in the carnival season

Data from the Hamburg University Clinic gave the listening psychotherapists a clear sign of the new lull. In the 1970s 4 per cent of German men between 25 and 45 complained about their loss of libido; in the 1990s it is 16 per cent.

Women, too, are losing interest, at least in sex with regular partners. In the 1970s, 8 per cent of women said they had lost interest in sex. By the 1990s the figure reached 58 per cent. Other studies, however, suggest that the male libido is the chief problem: women

lose interest primarily after the birth of a second child.

Surveys commissioned by Durex, the condom manufacturer, suggest that Germans fall in the middle range as far as frequency of sex is concerned. French have sex on average 151 times a year; Americans, 148 times; Germans, 129 times; British, 113 times (but they last longer); and, Italians, 105 times. But researchers in Germany believe the real frequency of sex may be an average of less than once a week.

A family advice centre reports a big increase in male inquiries about loss of libido. "Often, it is from professionally successful, dynamic young men, designers or journalists," said Ingrid Fudol, a counsellor. An analysis of German students' sex lives in the sample years 1966, 1981 and 1996 shows that women students enjoy more sex with more partners, than their male counterparts.

Helm Stierlin, a Heidelberg family therapist, believes that women's expectations of their partners have risen over the decades. At the same time childless career women wield more authority within the family. The relationship changes after childbirth when partners re-negotiate various aspects of their lives, such as who is to be the main breadwinner or the main child carer, and who will be responsible for housework. The stresses induced by constant



Germans dress up as clowns for Weiberfastnacht, the start of carnival week when women snip off colleagues' ties in a castration ritual

renegotiation erode sexual attraction.

In a *Spiegel* special report, Petra Reski, describing the average bedtime routine, wrote: "The German male is master of erotic minimalism. First, he takes off his glasses and watch, then puts his change on the bedside cabinet. He hangs his suit up to air on

the balcony and inserts the shoe trees. He recharges his mobile telephone, sets the alarm clock for seven, turns the light off and gets to work."

The findings, presented at the congress titled "Lust und Last - Passion and Pressure", partly explain the new wave of sex advice books and semi-pornographic shows on pri-

vate television channels. The growth of the industry is an attempt to rekindle interest in sex among Germans, who are not obsessed by sex.

In the latest best-seller guide titled, *Why Just Dream About It?*, two female co-authors advise women to "follow your man into the bathroom as he brushes his teeth and proposi-

tion him. Sit on the vibrating washing machine or the tumble dryer."

German men, however, are taking fright at such aggressive tactics. In Disseldorf, a radical sex and reproduction strike. They want more rights for fathers and "urgent measures against the omnipresent

sexual harassment by women, above all the aggressive display of naked breasts".

Other self-help groups are also starting up. For the past year an agency promoting adultery has been operating in Hamburg. It has 12,000 members who pay a fee to be put in touch with aspiring adulterers. It is run by a woman.

Bonn will hit target for euro

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

GERMANY is sure to qualify for economic and monetary union and will easily meet the 3 per cent debt target which seemed for many months to be wriggling out of Bonn's range.

That was the conclusion reached by economists yesterday after leaks from the statistics office and research institutes showed that the nation's public sector debt would amount to around 2.8 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1997, the benchmark year for the euro. The official figures for 1997 are due to be released in a week. By that time the figures for the other candidates for euro entry should also be in, and a broad framework of the future monetary union will be clear.

The German Institute for Economic Research shows that GDP increased by 3 per cent or DM3.6 trillion (£1.2 trillion) last year. The monthly Bundesbank report shows

that the public deficit from federal, provincial and city budgets has dropped to DM100 billion. That produces a deficit of just below 2.8 per cent.

Other factors may push up the deficit slightly. UBS, the Swiss bank, is for example predicting a precise 3 per cent for the Germans. But it is clear that Germany has made it. This will strengthen the Government's case in the forthcoming constitutional court hearing on the euro. Four academics claim that the euro

cannot be acceptable constitutionally if Germany misses, even by a small margin, the Maastricht targets. The Government has an obligation to guarantee the long-term stability of the mark.

The Association for the Monetary Union of Europe has presented a study in Bonn called *The Sustainability Report* which measures economic convergence. "Europe is ready for economic and monetary union and Italy must participate," said Dr Stefan Collignon, director of the

group's research and communications. "In the long run this will be better than what we have at the moment."

Italy, whose debt is more than twice the Maastricht treaty limit, was "on the edge", he said. But because of the impact on interest rates which would affect Rome's ability to pay off its debt, it would be better to let Italy join EMU, he said.

Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, has asked the central bank to assess the suitability of all euro candidates, and Hans Tietmeyer, the bank's president, is to brief the Cabinet on March 17. The Chancellor's hope is that the Bundesbank will back broad membership of EMU and that he can then reassure voters about the stability of the mark.

Matthew Parris, page 20
Leading article and Letters, page 21

Danes face snap election

Copenhagen: In a surprise announcement, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, the Danish Prime Minister, yesterday called a snap general election for March 11, six months before the September deadline (Christopher Follett

writes). The election will be held before a referendum on May 28 to ratify the European Union's Amsterdam Treaty. Mr. Rasmussen said he had called the vote early to clear the air of election fever before the May vote.

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Holocaust museum chief axed for snub to Arafat

FROM BRONWEN MADDOK IN WASHINGTON

THE director of Washington's Holocaust Museum has been ousted after his refusal to greet Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, last month.

Valter Reich, the second director of the four-year landmark, steps down at the end of next month from his post which pays \$18,000 (£10,000) a year. His refusal to greet Mr Arafat on a tour of exhibits — a courtesy routinely granted to distinguished guests — was bluntly overruled by the museum's governing council, which includes Administration officials deeply involved in the Middle East peace process.

"The minute Reich refused to greet Arafat, he was finished," a senior museum official is reported to have said. Mr Reich's lawyer, Nathan Lewin, has called his objection to receiving the Palestinian leader "a matter of conscience in a museum of conscience".

Mr Arafat's visit, which bitterly divided museum authorities and the Jewish community was overshadowed in Washington by the explosion of the Monica Lewinsky allegations against President Clinton. But it marked a toughening of the US stance towards Israel after that country's failure to surrender land to the Palestinians as promised late last year.

The White House was pointedly cool towards Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, who arrived two days before Mr Arafat.

Federal officials on the museum's governing council, including Dennis Ross, the Middle East envoy, wanted to invite Mr Arafat there as a way for Palestinians to acknowledge the Holocaust.

In the event, Mr Arafat did not have time to take up the offer, but left open the possibility of a future visit.

Mr Reich, 54, a pianist specialising in the psychology of terrorism, was two when the Second World War ended. His family, Polish Jews, had survived in hiding and made a night-time escape to the American sector of Berlin before travelling to New York.

The museum has drawn about two million visitors a year, far more than expected.

White House in ploy to limit aides' testimony

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE White House entered a political minefield yesterday, attempting to cite executive privilege as a partial shield for President Clinton's senior aides testifying in the Monica Lewinsky investigation.

In an unprecedented step certain to be challenged by Kenneth Starr, the independent prosecutor investigating the President's alleged affair with the former trainee, White House lawyers appeared to be trying to limit the scope of testimony by at least two officials.

The first, Bruce Lindsey, the deputy White House counsel, arrived for a second day at the grand jury in Washington accompanied by four White House lawyers prepared for a showdown over the tactic, clearly designed to slow the inquiry. Testimony by Mr Lindsey, the President's closest adviser and troubleshooter, had been delayed for almost an hour the previous day after lawyers failed to agree about the extent of his statements.

Prosecutors believe Mr Lindsey's position at the White House makes him a central witness who could shed light not merely on the alleged affair with Ms Lewinsky, but also on reports that Mr Clinton may have had a sexual

encounter nearly five years ago with Kathleen Willey, a volunteer.

Mr Starr yesterday abruptly cancelled an appearance by Vernon Jordan, another Clinton confidant central to the disputed allegation of whether the President asked Ms Lewinsky to lie about their relationship. The change of plan came amid reports that Mr Jordan had been asked by the President's private secretary to help the trainee to find a job three days after lawyers in the Paula Jones sexual harassment suit revealed that they wanted to question Ms Lewinsky about her alleged affair.

Mr Jordan reportedly met Ms Lewinsky, by then a lowly Pentagon official, four times and held seven telephone conversations with her during the next month, securing her a job at Revlon, the cosmetics company.

The Washington power broker would not be covered by executive privilege, and it appeared that the priority of the Starr inquiry was to resolve this issue. Richard Nixon tried unsuccessfully to employ this assertion of presidential authority in 1974 during Watergate.

But the White House is threatening to employ a previously untested use of privilege

in the case of both Mr Lindsey and John Podesta, the deputy chief of staff, who asked the US Ambassador to the United Nations to find Ms Lewinsky a job in New York.

The high-risk strategy could severely damage the President if it backfires. While Mr Clinton has used executive privilege as a bargaining tool to limit inquiries in the past, he has never been forced to take the politically embarrassing step of invoking a prerogative that federal courts have traditionally confined to matters of national security.

His lawyers have, therefore, created a legalistic formula designed to include lawyer-client privilege but not requiring the President's seal of approval. Under this concept, specific conversations between the President and, for example, Mr Lindsey could be protected by the same confidentiality governing other executive conversations.

Congress has demanded that the President formally invoke executive privilege, but yesterday's tactic has never been tested in court. And experts believe that the White House is taking a deliberate gamble that, even if the strategy fails, it will lead to lengthy litigation and, in effect, slow Mr Starr's inquiry to a crawl.



Riverbed clue to life on Mars

Evidence that there was once water flowing on Mars — and that it might therefore have harboured life — is revealed in pictures taken by the American spacecraft Mars Global Surveyor (Nigel Hawkes writes). There are clear signs of ancient riverbeds in the

picture which shows a plateau (in the centre) surrounded by steep slopes and broad, debris-filled gullies and intervening rocky spurs. It shows a part of the Valles Marineris, a huge system of canyons running for 2,500 miles along the equator of Mars. Dr Wesley Huntress, of the Nasa space agency, said the rock formations showed that Mars must have been extremely active once.

Bookshop accused over nude children pictures

Los Angeles: America's largest bookshop chain has been indicted in two Southern states under child pornography laws for selling coffee-table books with pictures of naked children (Giles Whittell writes).

Single out by Alabama, Barnes and Noble faces up to \$320,000 (£200,000) in fines if convicted of distributing "obscene material" of minors engaged in "obscene acts". The material is in books by well-known photographers: *The Age of Innocence* by David Hamilton and *Radiant Identities* by Jock Sturges. Similar charges involving the titles were filed in Tennessee in November and could lead to criminal trials in both states.

Mr Sturges's photographs of children — clothed and unclothed, in studio as well as natural settings — have been seen internationally in museums. The ten-year-old book has sold more than 60,000 copies. Even so, Bill Pryor, Alabama's attorney-general, claimed it was "designed to elicit a sexual response" and so broke state law.

Mr Sturges said his photographs were "not done flirtatiously" and a trial would waste taxpayers' money.

The bookseller said that, while it may not personally endorse all books that we sell, we respect the right of individuals to make decisions about what they buy and read."

Critics hail operatic debut of blind tenor



Bocelli: "Bit like facing a firing squad"

Rome: Italian critics yesterday hailed the first opera performance by the rising young Italian tenor, Andrea Bocelli, who is blind. Signor Bocelli began his rise to fame by singing light operas at song festivals, but his appearance in Scarlatti's *La Bohème* as Cyprien in Scarpia's company has established him as a potentially strong rival to Luciano Pavarotti, who is limiting his performances because of health problems (Richard Owen writes).

Signor Bocelli's fellow singers, including Daniela Dessi, in the role of Mimì, helped to guide him around the stage. But other opera singers said Signor Bocelli did not have the voice for "major league opera" and should "stick to the lighter stuff". Katia Ricciarelli, the leading soprano, said she had been singing *La Bohème* since 1969 "and it

is all based on movement". She added: "With all due respect to the blind, what does Bocelli think he is doing? He sold millions of records, what more does he want?" Critics said there was "rapturous applause" for Signor Bocelli's performance of the aria *Your Tiny Hand Is Frozen*. Signor Bocelli said: "It was a bit like facing a firing squad. But I had to know whether I could dedicate my career from now on to serious opera."

Opera House, page 35

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Kuwait hopes to learn fate of lost 600

FROM ANTHONY LOVD IN KUWAIT
KUWAITIS see the present standoff as the last chance to solve the mystery of the fate of more than 600 prisoners taken by Iraqi forces during the 1990 occupation.

PRISONERS

"This is the most hurting issue in Kuwait at present," said Du'ajj al-Auzzi, head of the National Committee for Missing and Prisoners of War. "We have 605 missing since 1991, documented as prisoners. For a country as small as Kuwait that represents a proportion of the population equivalent to quarter of a million American citizens. For the international community the issue at stake now is Iraqi weapons, but for us it is the release of these prisoners."

Most of the missing were arrested during the months that immediately followed Iraq's invasion of Kuwait as the Iraqi security service, the Mukhabarat, sought to quell Kuwaiti resistance. Others were taken later as hostages during the run up to Iraq's retreat. However, rather than being a simple list of "missing persons" lost in the confusion of war, 90 per cent of the 605 names on the current records are documented as people definitely held as prisoner at one time.

Mr al-Anzi believes some of the missing are dead, but most are being held as a card for Iraq to play at a future date. Families of the missing hope that on the tails of the present crisis the allies will push Iraq to disclose evidence concerning their fate.

Nation's poverty may force a deal

Airstrikes would shake a weak economy, leaving Saddam vulnerable to insurrection. Sam Kiley writes in Baghdad

WIRES snaked from the back of a whirring motor into junctions protected by plastic bags and punctured by naked copper wires carrying power to Baghdad Zoo's Ferris wheel. Clanking and grinding taddlers clung to the sides of a huge zinc bucket with determined frowns.

"You've got to work hard to have fun in Baghdad," said their mother, watching the motor anxiously as the rubber band driving the wheel flopped and squeaked.

Near by more women and their children pressed close to the wire and stared with unusual fascination at the chicken and turkey house. After seven years of sanctions that have crippled Iraq's economy, but failed to force President Saddam Hussein to disable and destroy his chemical, nuclear and biological weapons, their interest in the fowl was more culinary than zoological. For most Iraqis, the price of a chicken is a week's wages; a turkey represents unimaginable luxury.

Most of the larger animals in the zoo, once the finest in the Arab world, have died in the past few years. Now all it has to offer are the fowl, a few bears lying comatose in urine-soaked cages, and skinny monkeys staring blankly into space. But, compared with

what Baghdad's residents have to watch on television, the zoo is probably a treat. A diet of endless propaganda films about Field Marshal Saddam and his "20 glorious years" at the helm of the now impoverished Iraqi nation, means many consider obscure Australian soap operas the height of cultural sophistication, in a country where all satellite television has been banned for years.

"The bottom line," said one English-language student outside the zoo, "is that we're pretty bored. We've got no money, and now even our parks and gardens are falling to bits. It's pathetic."

The student would not give his name for fear of retribution from the Iraqi mukhabarat. The secret police is reckoned to be one of Iraq's biggest employers now, most industries having ground to a halt because of the ban on all oil exports, bar \$4 billion (£2.5 billion) a year that may be traded for food and medicines — a swap monitored closely by the United Nations.

According to the United Nations Children's Fund, hundreds of thousands of children have died of malnutrition and almost a million more are "chronically malnourished". But some businessmen in central Baghdad have flourished. All, who



A 20-year-old brown bear has a vegetarian diet in Baghdad's rundown zoo, also suffering from the country's shortages of food and medicine

owns an electrical store, has a shop crammed with generators, lathes and other light industrial gadgets that he sells to artisans laid off by large industrial concerns.

"I get good money for these things because, with stuff like lathes and generators, people can start their own businesses.

They copy spare parts for cars and that kind of thing," he said. His optimism is rare. The poverty, and grey, dry misery in the zoo, are indications that Saddam has little to play with in his game of dare over UN inspections. In 1990, when he invaded Kuwait, he took on a vast alliance of

forces in 1991, he had a huge army, a massive budget surplus and no idea what would be thrown at him. As he ponders what he will offer to Kofi Annan when the UN Secretary-General makes a last-minute visit to Baghdad today, he will know from harsh experience what air-

strikes could do to what is left of his economy. He will know, too, how vulnerable he would be then to his neighbours and internal Kurdish dissidents.

Yesterday some diplomats said this represented their best hope that Saddam would accept a face-saving formula which would, for the time

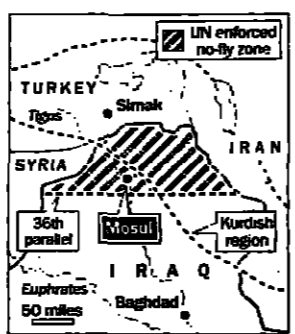
being, mean that the US and British forces standing by in the Gulf could be stood down.

"Sadly, poverty may be the best hope of avoiding a conflict, Saddam knows he cannot afford to lose much more. The danger, however, is that he may not care," said one senior diplomatic source.

Turkey relies on winter snows to guard border with Iraq

AS THE helicopter climbs through a gap in the Cudi mountains along the Iraqi border, Turkey's secret weapon suddenly looms into view. President Saddam Hussein may have his stocks of anthrax, but the snow is definitely on the Turks' side.

"The border has just been reinforced," General Cetin Dogan, who supervises the defence of Turkey's southern front, said. It is a half-joking reference to a recent blizzard that has rendered most of the 235-mile-long frontier impassable. It is also one reason why he has not requested extra troops to cope with the threat of war in Iraq. He already has



The Turkish front line remains calm, Andrew Finkel writes from Sirnak

panic in Ankara where the fear is that Turkey is being dragged into an adventure it cannot control.

Only this week Bulent Ecevit, the Deputy Prime Minister, repeated his concern that Britain was egging on Washington to bomb Baghdad. The result, he worries, will be an independent Kurdish state in Iraq that will incite the Kurds on the Turkish side of the border.

It is not a view shared on the ground. "Anyone betting on a Kurdish state is going to lose," said one officer. The heavily armed factions of the Kurdistan Democratic Party and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

have been observing an uneasy truce since November.

The Turkish military is also dismissive of front-page claims that Scud missiles are poised to hit key Anatolian cities. They doubt Saddam has the technical capacity to deliver the threat. "There is no panic here," Besir Tatar, the Mayor of Sirnak, said. There is not a gas mask in sight in the municipal-owned coffee house where the talk is of perennial problems such as unemployment rather than war.

Sirnak was at the centre of the 1991 refugee crisis when Iraqi Kurds fled a vengeful Saddam at the end of the Gulf

War. The queues now are not of refugees trying to get out of northern Iraq but of local lorry drivers trying to get into Iraq across the Habur crossing to buy cheap diesel oil to resell in Turkey. This is a much-needed source of income since Turkey says it is still paying the price of the United Nations oil embargo on Iraq and lost trade.

The Turkish authorities also believe that war would strengthen the hands of the anti-Turkish Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) which waged a separatist campaign based in the newly created no man's land on the Iraqi side of the

border. "But things are very different now," said Major-General Ozer Keceoglu, who commands the gendarmes in Sirnak. The military says new tactics and a hearts-and-minds campaign has produced results.

A less publicised reason for Turkey's relative peace of mind along its border is the military's forging of an alliance with the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). Together, they now control both sides of the mountains and intercept potential trouble — be it IRA stores stashed in mountain caves or a new flood of refugees fleeing from Baghdad.

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Annan begins mission as UN seeks tight terms

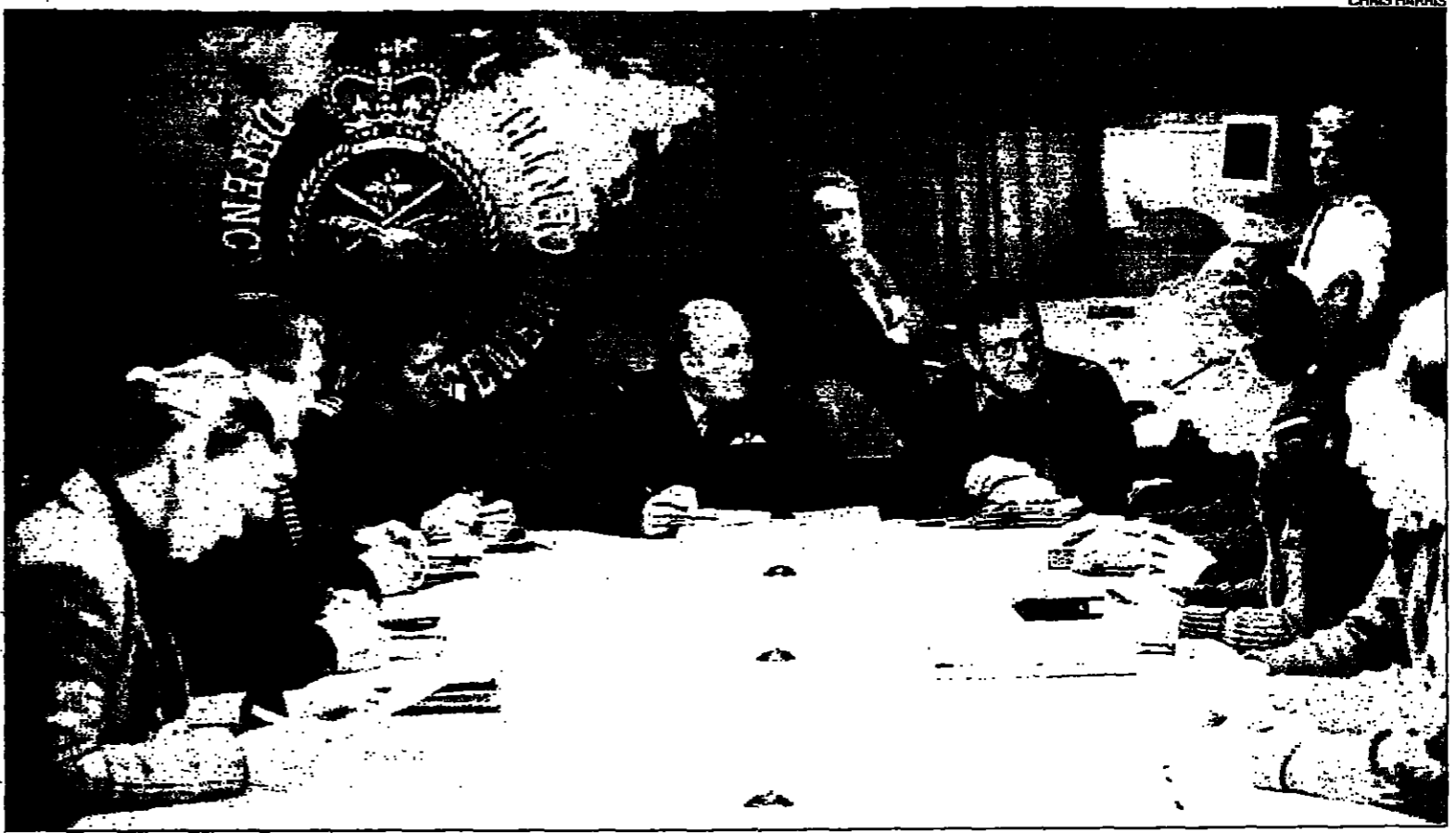
By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR, AND JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary-General, set off this morning for Baghdad on a last-ditch mission to prevent Western airstrikes on Iraq while saving the authority and reputation of the United Nations.

DIPLOMACY

obstruction of UN inspectors. Kuwait threw its weight behind such a measure, insisting that any "backtracking or reneging" by Iraq on its obligations should automatically result in military force. Kuwait said Iraq should also be forced to submit "solemn guarantees in writing at the highest official level, pledging that they would not repeat similar provocations".

Iraq yesterday that there would be serious consequences if it failed to fulfil UN resolutions. "I have sent our Foreign Affairs Minister to give Saddam Hussein a clear message - 'The thunderstorm is coming. You must comply with the decisions of the UN'", he said in a French newspaper interview.



Senior military officers held a meeting yesterday morning in the basement bunker crisis management centre at the Ministry of Defence to monitor the Iraqi situation. Headed by Air Marshal John Day, Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (commitments), and Major-General Graham Ewer, Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (logistics), the Chief of Defence Staff (logistics), the bunker, which has reinforced doors and sleeping quarters, is linked by video-conferencing to the main war bunker at Northwood, west of London, which houses the Permanent Joint Headquarters, commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir Christopher Wallace, Chief of Joint Operations (Michael Evans writes). It is also linked to Nato headquarters in Brussels and Downing Street. The senior officers meet twice a day.

Defence chiefs monitor crisis

Two other senior military officials attended: Rear Admiral Simon Moore, Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (commitments), and Major-General Graham Ewer, Assistant

Chief of Defence Staff (logistics). The bunker, which has reinforced doors and sleeping quarters, is linked by video-conferencing to the main war bunker at Northwood, west of

London, which houses the Permanent Joint Headquarters, commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir Christopher Wallace, Chief of Joint Operations (Michael Evans writes). It is also linked to Nato headquarters in Brussels and Downing Street. The senior officers meet twice a day.

UN weapons inspectors are also making preparations to move into the country to test Iraq's good faith within days of a possible compromise allowing the inspectors, accompanied by a diplomatic escort, access to the eight presidential sites at the heart of the current conflict. After months of tension, with Iraq, key Security Council members are reluctant to accept any deal that would allow Baghdad to renew the crisis at will by blocking UN inspectors again in the near future.

The UN weapons inspectors are preparing to test Iraq's good faith?

A resolution warning Iraq that breaking its word would amount to a "material breach" would, in effect, allow the United States and Britain to launch airstrikes without further recourse to the Security Council in the event of further

ion appeared more sceptical about its chances. Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, said on television yesterday that America wanted to resolve the dispute peacefully. But she added: "If we cannot, we will be using force and the American people will be behind us."

After a fevered round of diplomacy, Arab and regional leaders have showered Saddam with advice to accept the conditions that will be outlined by Mr Annan. President Demirel of Turkey warned

Israelis sell anti-gas sheeting to Jordan

Jerusalem: A panic about a possible Iraqi germ warfare attack continued to spread yesterday. Israeli radio reported that Jordan had started buying plastic sheeting from an Israeli kibbutz factory to protect against a feared gas attack.

Walker writes. Few details about the latest bizarre twist in Israeli-Arab relations were made available in an effort to prevent stirring up hostile reaction in Jordan, where public sympathy is strongly pro-Iraqi.

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Hot ticket: the Japanese designer Taishu Nobukuni is showing in the shell of a restaurant

The triumph of hype over experience

Alexander McQueen is once again the hottest ticket of London Fashion Week — the one that students will storm barricades to get into, and that Demi Moore will stand for (she did, last season). But while fashion editors look forward to it all week and will raise hell if they aren't in the front row, their real obsession next week will be elsewhere.

Who is Anthony Symonds and does he really have a walk full of supermodels at his disposal? Will Andrew Groves do insects again? (Last season it was dying flies). Are you going to Nobukuni (pronounced "no bikini")?

With London now established as the birthplace of new talent, it is not enough to see the big names. You have to see the next big name, and you won't find these people on the official schedule issued by the British Fashion Council.

To see these wonders you have to go "off-schedule" into the twilight world of the fringe, where models change on staircases, and the next McQueen shoehorn the girls into his conceptual interpretations of the straitjacket.

Fashion editors who would not dream of flying economy, will sit shivering in chilly urban warehouses waiting for the most overhyped debuts. Groves, a newcomer who is undoubtedly the master of hype, is staging his show in the catacombs at Camden. Simon Costin, McQueen's former art director, is in charge of the production and the event is sure to be a *dance macabre*.

Taishu Nobukuni is showing in the concrete shell destined to be the Axis restaurant of the new hotel One Aldwych, while Roland Mouret, the designer behind the now disbanded People Corporation, is showing in The Ragged School in Southwark. The invitation is a piece of toast wrapped in netting. More conventionally, Symonds, a former Graduate of the Year who has worked at Krizia, will be showing in the Leisure Lounge, a nightclub in Holborn, where, not so coincidentally, People Corporation once staged a show.

At the other end of the scale, a few newcomers are bucking the trend and going upmarket. Scott Henshall, the creator of padded bikinis bearing Wedg-

wood designs (an official collaboration) is showing in the ballroom of the Lansdowne Club, while Brach & Brach, designed by Teresa Brach and Craig Allison-Higgins, will be unveiling their collection, inspired by the temple dances of la boyadere, in the Austrian Ambassador's residence.

No one gets to the top without talent, but it's equally true that they won't make it without considerable amounts of hype. Last season, it was Groves, a recent St Martin's graduate, who scored highest on the hypometer. Without so much as a stockist to his name, he'd already earned a mention in *American Vogue*, and his show in a disused bus depot in Victoria attracted the likes of Suzy Menkes, of the *International Herald Tribune*, and the stylist Isabella Blow. They were treated to the sight of *über-model*, Georgina Cooper, removing her jacket to release a cloud of specially bred flies.

them on to the main schedule, the press pack cares more about new ideas and potential, than a grasp of the finer points of manufacture. After all, very few people actually bought McQueen's bumsters — but everyone wanted to know about them. Stella McCartney was never on the official schedule — but now she's in charge of Chloé. So what if a designer is barely out of St Martin's? So much the better — catch them now before they're ruling the world. And out of this scene, talent



Last season's big hit: Tristan Webber



The kingmaker: stylist Isabella Blow

really does emerge. Last season, Tristan Webber was the big hit. He only graduated from the St Martin's MA course last March, but his red leather jackets and orchid print chiffons are on sale at Liberty and Koh Samui while stores in Italy and France also bought his pieces. The 25-year-old now has a sponsor, Tanqueray Gin, and is on the main schedule. Groves is not, and can't

and that is on a made-to-order basis.

Indeed, who draws the crowds and who doesn't, depends as much on the other names connected with a show as on the designer themselves. For in an industry where no one wants to have egg on their face, people are effectively staking their reputations when they join a particular team. But equally, if you don't get on board at the beginning it may be too late. Every stylist in the business would like to work on a McQueen show — but it is Katy England, a nobody five years ago, who styles both the McQueen and the Givenchy show, having collaborated with the designer from the outset. In fashion, friendship is everything.

Isabella Blow is widely seen as the kingmaker — she bought McQueen's entire graduation collection, promoted the milliner Philip Treacy, and trumpeted Webber last season — which partly explains the impressive turn-out for his show. She got it right, and now not only does her opinion count, but she also has access to some of the biggest names in fashion.

This season, Blow is talking up Nobukuni, a Japanese designer, who trained at Central St Martin's but is now based in Osaka. His first good move was to hook up with the PR Kelly Luchford, sister of the photographer Glen Luchford, who shoots the Prada campaigns. Luchford persuaded the stylist Beki Lamb, currently working on the All Saints video, to come on board. The photographer James Dimmock, another friend of Luchford's, is doing the lighting.

Crucially, Luchford also has *her* venue, the soon-to-be restaurant at One Aldwych. The chance to be in London's most fashionable restaurant before it has opened would alone provide sufficient attraction for industry luminaries. The frocks will be a bonus.

Robocop prepares for battle

The British Army has been putting the infantryman of the next century through his paces: laden with computerised technology and military hardware, his killing power is awesome. At least, that is what scientists and engineers "designing the future soldier" claim.

They say Tommy Atkins has been transformed into Robocop — a lethal human weapon capable of outfighting the enemy on any battlefield, particularly at night. Linked to his field commanders by backpack computer, radio, and a remote camera attached to his helmet, the infantryman will be able to locate and eliminate the opposition long before he himself can be detected.

The range of tasks the foot soldier faces is constantly

growing. And he is still expected to fix bayonets, drag his adversary out of a foxhole and propel him to the table where the peace treaty is to be signed.

Across the three services there have been big changes in the way wars are conducted. But fighting on foot has not altered much — it is still chaotic and bloody, and courage, wit and morale are not always enough.

But now future infantry system technology (Fist) aims to give individual foot soldiers "the sort of capabilities we had previously given only to aircraft or tanks", says Mike Brown, the project manager.

"For example, the rifle sight can pick out the target on the helmet's VDU screen — the probability is a lethal hit first time," he adds.

Britain's Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (Dera) has provided a host of other 21st-century "capability enhancements", among them "first-round hit probability and weapons lethality" — ie, killing machine.

"Let's face it, your bog standard infantryman is no rocket scientist. But mix in the technology we are developing, and you have a person who is going to come home alive and well," says Brown. "While the basic role of the infantry will never change, the intense pace of operations that Fist enables will result in the biggest shake-up in military operations since the internal combustion engine replaced the horse on the battlefield."

"The infantry will be able to see and shoot the enemy before he sees and shoots them, to fight better than them at night, be less vulnerable to incoming fire and be able to pass and receive orders more quickly. In short — to outfight any aggressor in any phase or form of war."

However, not all those involved in the early Fist trials shared his confidence. Some soldiers interviewed for Channel 4's *The War Machine* described the project as "a disaster". One said: "The system did not function, and if it's not foolproof, then it is useless on the battlefield."

Another described the high-tech helmet as "a very useful ashtray". To the irritation of Brown and his colleagues, the programme — made with the full co-operation of Dera —

seems to focus on technical glitches that dogged Fist in its first incarnation a year or so ago. Brown says many have now been sorted.

"Right at the start we had not wanted to do the film, and it looks as though our fears were founded. Such publicity can only discourage the private sector investment and collaboration we need."

"This system aims to save British lives," he adds. "Knocking Fist threatens that, because there is a danger the plug will be pulled on the project."

Former combat veterans have expressed concern over the level of technology to be built into the future soldier's kit, however, saying helmet-mounted cameras and visor VDUs turn war into a video game. A junior officer who saw combat during the Falklands conflict feared Fist would "numb down" the fighting man's response.

"War is up close and personal — images on your visor and a smart gun that cannot fail to hit the target turn it into a game. There is a danger that the soldier will come to view combat as a computer game," he says.

Brown rejects suggestions that new technology will distance soldiers from the real business of killing. "Tests show that the fighting man is more aware of his purpose with Fist than he is without. This equipment is non-intrusive and aimed at giving him enhanced capability."

"Every other military power will continue with this research and we would be at a considerable disadvantage if we did not. The object is survival. We want more of our people to come back alive."

● The War Machine will be shown on Monday at 9pm on Channel 4.

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Who used Diana first, Mr Blair?

John Lloyd expects a war under the banner of the People's Princess

The French philosopher Jean Baudrillard is famous for observing that the Gulf War did not take place — except on television. I have not seen Baudrillard commenting on Diana, Princess of Wales, but as we wallow uneasily between her death and the anniversary of her death, it is worth considering whether or not the Princess existed.

I saw her twice without the aid of electronics or newsprint, and so I would tend to believe she did: but I also believe that that fragile existence was long since replaced during her (presumed) life by this most monstrous machine which is her image. It is Image and Touchstone: it sits in the middle of British life still, as Britannia (which really does not exist) will presumably sit in the middle of the MandelDome, dwarfing all else about it, drawing life from us in death.

Tends to underpin the themes which the image-makers of the House of Harrods, otherwise Mohamed Al Fayed, wish to put in circulation. If there is not space on the DianaNet for the Al Fayed myths, what is there room for?

It is perhaps no accident, as the Marxists say, that No 10 puts out this grave expression of no-blame concern at this time. We may soon have our first post-Diana war, and the public relations themes which will keep our support going for this venture are now being tested. These have a problem: how is a nation which grieved for the Princess of Hearts and dedicated itself to honour her example in ridding the world of landmines to be readied for zapping the Iraqis?

We may follow the Americans. President Clinton's publicity people are staging "town meetings", for which the TV audience is prepared by a build-up which uses Cabinet members — Madeleine Albright and William Cohen — as if they were stars of an upcoming soap. We do things differently here, but usually not much. Tony Blair has the same imperative as Bill Clinton: he must reach out into don't know, don't care land, and put the fear of Saddam up our backbones like steel rods, make us feel proud to be zapping a world danger.

The tools which Margaret Thatcher used during the Falklands war and those picked up by John Major during the Gulf War are available still, of course: patriotism, duty, hatred of tyranny as a national birthright. But new Labour is not wholly comfortable with these tropes, even if the Prime Minister resonates to them: it has an ironic edge to it, it is too busy tearing down the constitutional safe houses in which patriotism and duty resided to be wholly of a piece with a British war of honour.

Are we who mourned Diana now ready to zap Iraqis?

Just as the worst of new Labour, a statement at once claiming the high moral ground while shrinking to make enemies by being precise on who was taking the low moral road. It was assumed that in frame and off message was this newspaper, which had been running excerpts from the book *Death of a Princess* by two Time journalists. Had it been singled out — and what else could Blair mean? It was by far the most prominent exhibit that week of the Diana industry — the warm glow surrounding 10 Downing Street would have been dispelled. For then the "aide" would have had to say what was wrong with the book. And there was nothing wrong with it.

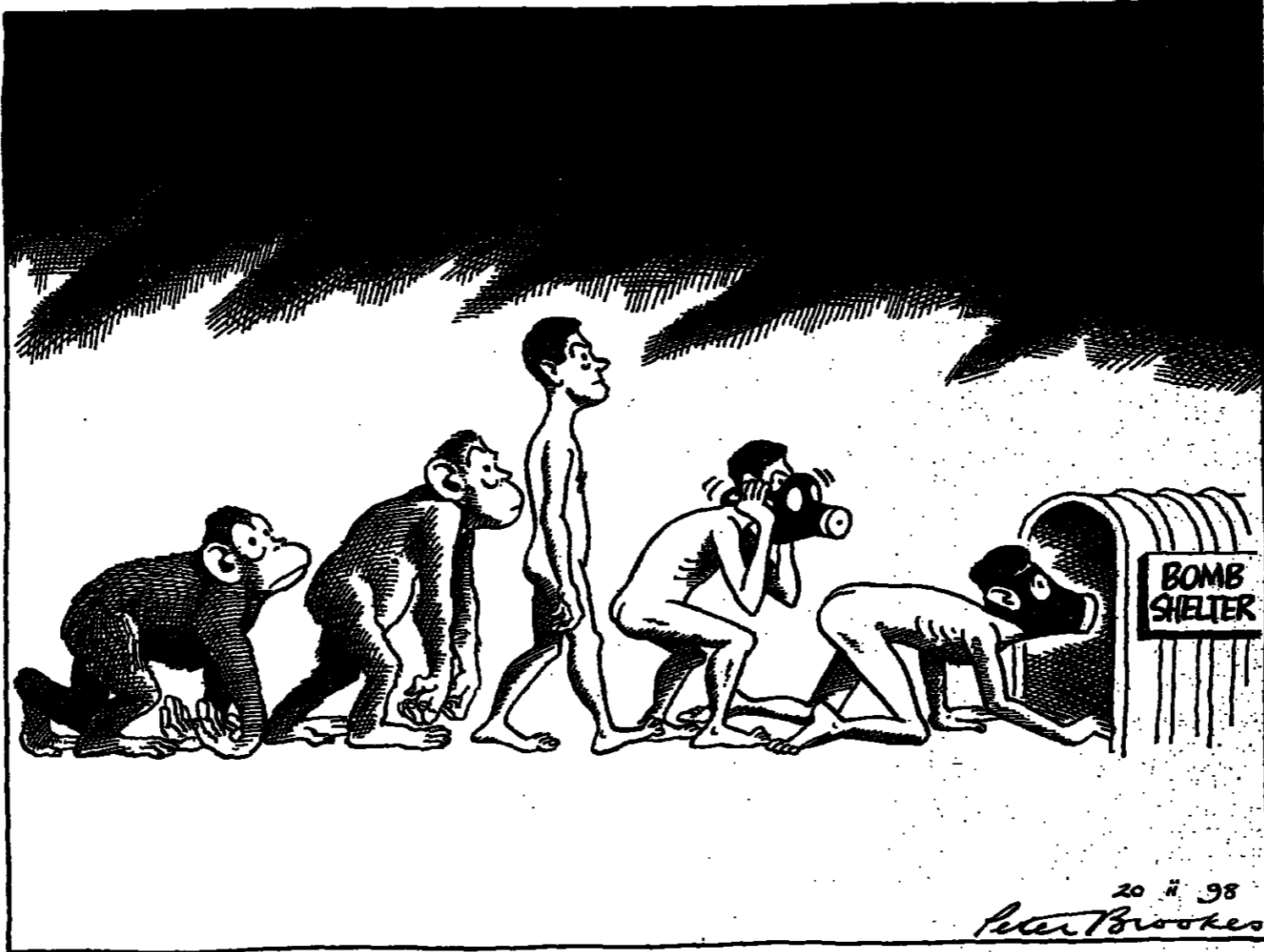
Diana is myth. She is more revered, at least in this country, than Jesus Christ. Football games stopped in her honour; they do not do so in honour of Jesus even where — as happened earlier this month — there is a request from the Church. She is an Internet goddess — a file of connections and fantasies and conspiracies into which anyone can dip and take and give at will. To write a book which gives what "evidence" there is that the accident was caused by the paparazzi, or that Diana and Dodi were about to marry, or that Diana was pregnant at the time of the crash, is all perfectly fine — even if, as seems the case, the "evidence"

the Gulf War are available still, of course: patriotism, duty, hatred of tyranny as a national birthright. But new Labour is not wholly comfortable with these tropes, even if the Prime Minister resonates to them: it has an ironic edge to it, it is too busy tearing down the constitutional safe houses in which patriotism and duty resided to be wholly of a piece with a British war of honour.

It will have to have a different spin. It will have to be a call to arms based not on the achievement of victory but on the need to protect — perhaps, to pluck a phrase from Diana-speak, "the need to protect the grieving children". A war would, of course, create more grieving children (and grieving parents, for that matter). But it will be an imperative to project the images which underpin our mission before the media start publishing those which will undermine it.

It will be, as far as it can be spun to be, the People's War. It may not be called that, for the Second World War has that name already and it might be a sacrilege too far to steal it. But it will be waged under the shadow of the death of a Princess who may have been about to marry, may have been carrying the child of an Arab. Much Arab opinion believes that Diana was killed by the Royal Family, or some other part of the British Establishment. Will both sides carry the image of Diana on their virtual banners?

The author is associate editor of the New Statesman.



Be beastly to nutcases

Redwood shouldn't have insulted Kohl and the City; Hague must be glad he did

William Hague is a lucky chap. Fate has sent him the right row, with the right man, on the right issue, at the right time. For many months now Mr Hague has needed an occasion to crystallise for his party the difference between grown-up Euroscepticism and silly Europhobia. Awkward as the moment may be for the Conservative leader, John Redwood has provided that occasion, and Mr Hague has seized it.

This is almost too good to be true. The Shadow Industry Secretary has provided for the nation a living demonstration in almost pantomime form of what the Tory party dare not flirt with. Mr Redwood had tried to insult the leader of a country which is both an ally and an equal, a man who had been invited here to receive an honour: a man whose stature it is simply impossible to question.

There is no need to recite Helmut Kohl's qualifications for the distinction the City conferred upon him on Wednesday: they are so obvious that to rehearse them as though the matter were even capable of argument would approach discourtesy. This is a matter of good manners, as any host-carrier can see. Mr Redwood was rude to an important person from a friendly country.

He was also rude to the City of London. The Corporation is not Tony Blair's puppet. To see such eminent people as some kind of cat's paw in a Labour plot to insinuate a European single currency among us is conspiratorial on a scale which begins to offer Tony Benn serious competition. To embarrass the German Chancellor's hosts by impugning their guest, and in the same breath to question their independence in deciding to invite him, is an extraordinary misjudgment from a man who would be President of the Board of Trade.

And he was rude, too, to his colleagues. Herr Kohl's honour was none of Mr Redwood's business. Were it controversial in terms of economic policy, that would have been a matter for the Tories' Treasury team, led by Peter Lilley. Mr Lilley is a politician whose sobriety on questions of presentation stands in relation to Mr Redwood's rather as does that of Channel 4's Jon Snow to Live TV's Newsnight.

Were the honour controversial in terms of foreign policy, that would have been a matter for Michael Howard. Mr Howard was on his way to Guildhall to represent the

Tories when Mount Redwood erupted. Mr Howard is a natural theoretical ally of Mr Redwood's on European matters, but is more respectful of the proprieties. Had the eruption carried (or afterwards gained) the authority of the Shadow Cabinet, Mr Howard would have been completely upstaged. This is no way to forge a cabal.

I could go on... but why labour the point? Mr Redwood's boomerang press release was just a terrible blunder. By now you may be muttering "cripes — must he rub it in? It's obvious." Well yes, it is. But to John Redwood it was not obvious — and that leads me to an important question: What's with this guy?

In answering the question it is necessary to enter a word on the Shadow Industry Secretary's behalf. I feel things went wrong for Redwood. Being beastly to the Germans does not suit.

Not everything, however, should be blamed on the man, or this man. John Redwood is only a conspicuous example of a group within the party which I believe threatens its very survival. There is a certain kind of Euroscepticism which puts nice people off Euroscepticism. I am at a loss to fathom what it is about national sovereignty — an important idea — which turns one type of individual into a gibbering paranoiac. Asked why Margaret Thatcher disliked him, Edward Heath replied: "I cannot say; I am not a doctor." I suspect this is the best approach: we can make to answering the question: "What's eating these people?" I have encountered too many elderly women with sour lips at Referendum Party functions to believe that the European debate is susceptible to resolution without clinical intervention.

So one gives them a wide berth. When it comes to the great politico-economic issues of our time British voters are hard-put to marshal the argument, but have no difficulty at all in spotting a nutcase. Over the past two decades you could at any time have filled Wembley Stadium with

pointed ear that what he needed to do was waste in to the sweaty, mucky, all-too-human business that democratic politics is all about. So he tried — too hard. Being against the grain with him, Mr Redwood seems to have operated almost according to a manual — *Every Man His Own Streetfighter* — and started to behave like those Liberal Democrat councillors on safe Labour councils who fax off furiously typed press releases about potholes, entitled "Blood on their hands". In place of potholes, Mr Redwood has gone for Margaret Beckett's kitchen fittings and car-vanning plans. He should have stuck to Mr Spock as his role model. It never did Keith Joseph any harm. A party needs civilled, slightly dour intellectuality. It was when Spock began veering towards Rambi that things went wrong for Redwood.

Matthew Parris

ing off-course towards Rambi that things went wrong for Redwood. Being beastly to the Germans does not suit.

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So one gives them a wide berth. When it comes to the great politico-economic issues of our time British voters are hard-put to marshal the argument, but have no difficulty at all in spotting a nutcase. Over the past two decades you could at any time have filled Wembley Stadium with

taxi drivers, saloon-bar philosophers and people who watch smoozer on television, and without difficulty roused them to cheer every indictment in the Europhobes' anti-Brussels charge-sheet. Then they'd go out and vote for Shirley Williams. We do not like obsessives.

And it had begun to look as though the Eurosceptical case over the single currency had been captured by the obsessives. Moderates who doubted the single currency project began to shudder at the company we might be obliged to keep. Better news Gordon Brown had seldom heard.

For William Hague, an instinctive Eurosceptic, the news could not have been worse. He has faced the prospect of his party being turned into an unelectable Likud by the people he actually agrees with. The haste with which he scurried to grab Chris Patten back from the hallway, just as Mr Patten was putting on his coat and preparing to leave with those other Europeanists who had unwisely been dismissed as has-beens, bore witness to Mr Hague's horror of being left on his own in the kitchen with Iain Duncan Smith, Norman Lamont and Bill Cash.

It is as vital to Mr Patten and his friends as it is to Mr Hague that the word "mainstream" includes the strong Euro-friendly and the strong Eurosceptical currents which characterise their party. The Tory Europeanists need a definition of "the pale" which leaves many thoughtful Eurosceptics (like Peter Lilley — and John Major, actually — and certainly William Hague) within it. It is vital for Mr Hague that the pale should not become a fence around the Eurosceptic camp, confining him within it. Both sides, then, have an urgent need to draw a line, not around the Eurosceptics, but through them. Like Good Germans and Bad Germans, there are Good and Bad Eurosceptics. How could Mr Hague mark the difference?

Well, Mr Redwood has done it for him. He did so in a week at whose start the outlines of a coalition of Good Single-Currency Sceptics, including people like David Owen, had begun to emerge. Single currency scepticism has reached Limapouse-son: it may become chic even in Islington. And, as the doubters consolidate at the centre, so they may take courage to repel the extremists. The process began on Wednesday.

Philip Howard



In the beginning God created golf. Now it's motorised

The morning was spring-like for the middle of Feb. Squirrels sported skittishly in the unseasonal sunshine, chaffinches peeped in the stony recesses of the trees. And the Oldest Member, snug in his favourite chair by the 19th green, had succumbed to the influence of the Woodhouseian golfing romance. He had been playing club raconteur in this minor but important literary genre for most of the century. The pipe which he had been smoking lay beside him on the turf, and ever and anon there proceeded from him a muffled snore.

Because of its antiquity and the devotion of its followers, golf is the sport that provides the richest seam of all sporting activities for short stories and light verse. And that includes both hunting and the tribal mysteries of cricket. Indeed, true golfers would claim that theirs is not so much a sport but more of a religion, and therefore that it inspires not light verse but epic poetry. Suddenly the stillness was broken. There was the cressendo of putt-putt from an engine. And the visiting pro drove up to the clubhouse in a motorised cart, left it in the secretary's parking space and strode purposefully to the bar.

The Oldest Member sat up with as much of a jerk as his venerable frame, seasoned by 70 years in the rough, was capable of. "Would that contraption be a golf buggy?" he asked a junior member who was sidling nervously past him towards the locker room. The O.M. sounded as disgusted as a man who has just found his ball lodged in a viscous cowpat. "I believe so," replied the young man.

"But does the fellow not know that such machines are banned by the PGA Tour? Golf was invented by our early fathers as a rite of the open air, not a noisy racket." The Oldest Member expostulated. "If Ben Hogan could walk 36 holes in one day on barely repaired legs to win the US Open, why should lesser men need transport to get around the links?"

"The American courts have just ruled that the ban on golf carts discriminates against Casey Martin," replied the young rabbi, who read *Golf World*, the only magazine that matters. "Casey has crippled and deteriorating legs. And the judges decided that the ban on motorised carts was preventing him from following his trade as a professional golfer. Such carts are becoming quite fashionable. Nobody goes round the new Roxburgh course on the Tweed except in an electric buggy."

"Fesshaw! I cried the Oldest Member, to whom such innovations in his life's passion came as gall and wormwood. "If you allow motorised carts in the championship tournaments, they will soon be covered with the names of sponsors. You mechanise a game that is meant to be an elemental struggle between Man and Nature."

"We all honour the traditions of the game as much as you do, Sir," replied the young man, rashly. "But surely that should not mean casting out a good player just because he has a birth defect? And anyway motorised carts will give you a new twist for your golfing anecdotes. In addition to the foul behaviour of the Woodhouseian and lovers' hearts being sundered by misunderstanding and rejoined by a glorious eagle on the long 14th, golf carts provide a new *deus ex machina* for your plots. A ball might lodge in one, for example, and be carried up to the green."

A gleam lit up the Oldest Member's rheumy eyes. "Did I ever tell you the story of Jimmy Rothergill?" he asked. The young man jumped as though he had been hit in the seat of his plus-fours by a Big Bertha drive from the teeing green. "Good Heavens, is that the time?" he cried. But the Oldest Member was not to be diverted by temporal concerns. "Jimmy was a decent golfer, handicap 18. After his wedding he turned to his bride and said to her, 'Dearest, I have a confession to make. I am a passionate golfer: I sleep, eat and breathe golf. Any moment I shall slip away from the links I count as time wasted.' And his bride replied: 'Thank you for being so honest, darling. Now I have a confession to make. I am a hooker.' 'No problem,' said Jimmy, taking her wrists. 'You hold your left hand just a little higher than the right, with your thumb down here...' And from the next-door chair came the gentle-rumble of deep breathing in the ancient tribal sporadic of golf and gowf stories.

Rite wrongs

CLARE SHORT is to blow £20,000 of her department's tiny budget on a gender sensitisation workshop for Swaziland's MPs. When I broke the news to His Majesty King Mswati II he was not amused. Nor are MPs who believed that the Department for International Development was meant to tackle starvation and poverty. Ms Short, a long-time opponent of cheesecake photographs appearing in the popular press, is funding a conference open only to the African kingdom's MPs to "sensitise the parliamentarians to the strategic and practical gender needs of Swaziland men and women". Swaziland, you see, takes a rather different line on sexual relations from Labour's Islington sisters. Polygamy is held to be hip: 55 of Swaziland's 65 MPs are drawn from the Tinkhundla, or chiefdoms, most of whom have more than one wife. King Mswati, who is 29, already has six wives. HM King Sobhuza II, his father, boasted 64.

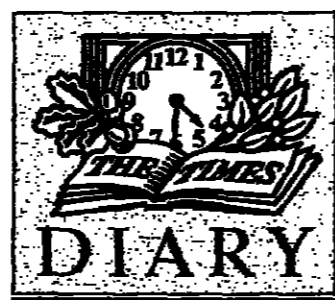
The country is certainly in need of Ms Short's help. Life expectancy for men is 43 years, almost a quarter of the population cannot read and electricity is a luxury. But her department argues that empowering women is the only way to tackle poverty. "It's only by allowing women rights to access to employment and education that poverty can be relieved." A large spear at Swaziland's High Commission in London, however, denied that women had a bad deal in



Short course: Mswati, Clare

his homeland: "Gender sensitisation? You what? We have no problems with sex."

● A BLIND director has been hired by the BBC to make television programmes. Damon Rose, who has signed a two-year training contract, is working on his first programme (which tackles the worrying subject of "blind people and cars") called *From The Edge*, for BBC2. "I don't even think about being blind when I work,"



says Rose. "It's not really as visual a job as people think."

Hard knocks

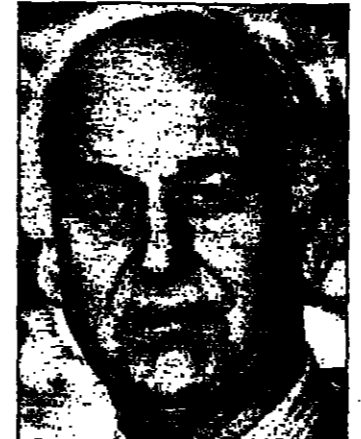
IT WAS an extraordinary thing to say. David Blunkett, Education Secretary, was holding a meeting of his ministerial colleagues. "It's the parents who need corporal punishment," mused Blunkett, discussing school discipline. "Parents who send their children to private school should be whipped." A bold, tough new Labour policy? Just a joke, insist Blunkett's people.

● BEN ELTON will soon be passing the port: the comedian, once described as "alternative", has just joined a gentlemen's club. He has been welcomed through the fine portals of the Royal Commonwealth Society. The Whitehall

club, which boasts Tony Blair and William Hague as members, is keen to attract a more happening crowd. Will the Establishment never lose its seductive allure to the ageing radical?

Thaw out

INSPECTOR MORSE is to be killed off. Colin Dexter, author of the popular novels, says he does not want any more films to be made about the Mozart-mad detective. "We have made 32 of these programmes now," he says



Murder mystery: who has got it in for Morse?

mournfully. "And we have had 75 people killed. It has made Oxford the murder capital of Europe."

The *Wench is Dead*, the latest two-hour film starring John Thaw, will be the last. "We have come to the end as far as the programmes go. I have agreed that with the makers," he asserts. "The simple thing is that one gets older and I don't have many more plots in me." But ever the man of mystery, he adds: "My publishers are expecting one more book, which I am writing now. I just don't want it filmed." This is endorsed by Thaw, now 65. "I think we have already filmed the best of the books."

● LABOUR MPs are to be spied on by their staff, at the prompting of their comrades in a union. Bill Morris, head of the Transport and General Workers' Union, has asked researchers to nominate their "worst parliamentary employer" which will be treated "in strict confidence". I hope Tony Blair, a T&G member employing unpaid students, does not fall foul of the new employment police.

Model protest

RALLYING among the twiced skirt and packed sandwich brigade at the countryside march next month will be the former model, Lucy Fer-



On the move: Lucy Ferry

ry, the delightful wife of singer Bryan. Mrs Ferry, who was recently sighted flogging a fur coat to a Kensington charity shop, is good in the stirrup. She has hunted with the Berkeley and in Ireland. She will be accompanied by her engaging son, Otis, 15, who intends to travel down from Marlborough College.

JASPER GERARD

سكنا من الامم



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE 19 February: Sir Michael Peat was received by The Queen today when Her Majesty conferred upon him the honour of Knighthood and invested him with the Insignia of a Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order.

Mr Hugh Roberts was received by The Queen when Her Majesty invested him with the Insignia of a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order.

Brigadier Miles Hunt-Davis was received by The Queen when Her Majesty invested him with the Insignia of a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order.

Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Mather was received by The Queen when Her Majesty invested him with the Insignia of a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order.

Mr Justice Pumfrey was received by The Queen upon his appointment as a Justice of the High Court when Her Majesty conferred upon him the honour of Knighthood and invested him with the Insignia of a Knight Bachelor.

The following were received in audience by The Queen upon their appointment as British High Commissioners: Mr Ian Whitehead (the Co-operative Republic of Guyana), Mr Gordon Baker (Barbados) and Mr Tony Millson (the Republic of the Gambia).

Mrs Whitehead and Mrs Baker were also received by Her Majesty.

Sir Paul Lever was received in audience by The Queen and kissed hands upon his appointment as Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany.

Lady Lever was also received by Her Majesty.

The Queen, accompanied by The Duke of Edinburgh, this afternoon opened the five-million home, built under the National House Building Council scheme, at the new Kingshold Development, King Edward's Road, Hack-

ney, London E9, and was received by the Chairman (the Rt Hon Sir Norman Fowler) and the Mayor of Hackney (Councillor J Lobenstein).

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness toured the estate, viewed an exhibition of the work of the National House Building Council and afterwards attended a Reception.

The Duke of Edinburgh, President of the National House Building Council, chaired a meeting of the Royal Mint Advisory Committee at Buckingham Palace.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, February 19: Today is the Anniversary of the Birthday of The Duke of York.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, February 19: The Princess Royal, President of Patrons, this morning opened the Crime Concern conference "Saturday Night Fever" at the Conference Forum, the Sedgwick Centre, London E1.

Her Royal Highness afterwards opened the Lansbury Lodge Project, Ricardo Street, London E14, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London (Field Marshal the Lord Bramall KG).

The Princess Royal, Patron, this afternoon opened the new Head office of the National Autistic Society at 393 City Road, London EC1.

Her Royal Highness later attended a Reception for Transaid at the Royal Automobile Club, Pall Mall, London SW1.

The Princess Royal, President, this evening attended a Dinner at Leeds Castle, Maidstone, to launch the Save the Children Fund's year as the adopted charity for the Institute of Directors, and was received by the Lord Thomson of Monifieth (Deputy Lieutenant of Kent).

ST JAMES'S PALACE, February 19: The Duke of Kent, Patron, the Hanover Band, this evening attended a Concert at the Wigmore Hall, London W1.

Today's royal engagements

The Queen will visit the North West Evening Mail, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, at 10.10; and, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, will visit Nelson Street Centre at 10.50; and will name HMS Ocean at Bute Dock, Dockyard, at 11.30. Later, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will attend a concert at Windsor Castle organised by the Prince Philip Trust Fund for Windsor and Maidenhead, at 8.00. The Duke of Edinburgh will visit Candle Corporation World Wide Manufacturing, Sandcastle Park, Barrow-in-Furness at 10.20.

Miss G.A. Mackenzie

A service of thanksgiving celebrating the life of Miss G.A. Mackenzie, Headmistress of St Helen's School, Northwood, Middlesex, from 1945-66, will be held on Friday, March 27, 1998, at 10.30am, at St Helen's Church, Bishopsgate, London EC3. Admission is free by ticket only; please apply to Sue Clark on 01923 828511 before March 10.

Patron

The Duke of Gloucester has become Patron of the Samsung British Legion Korean Scholarship Scheme.

Luncheon

English-Speaking Union The Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany was the guest of honour and speaker at a luncheon of the English-Speaking Union held yesterday at Dartmouth House. Mr Walter Lessing was in the chair.

Service dinner

Manchester and Salford Universities Air Squadron Air Vice-Marshal C.R. Spink, Air Officer Commanding 11/18 Group RAF, was the guest of honour at the annual dinner of the Manchester and Salford Universities Air Squadron held last night at RAF Woodvale. Squadron Leader N. May, Officer Commanding, presided.



The Right Rev Roy Williamson, who retired recently as Bishop of Southwark, at the Barbican, City of London, yesterday where he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Education from Kingston University

Birthdays today

Mr Robert Altman, film director, 73; Mrs Brenda Blethyn, actress, 52; Mr Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, 47; Mr John Browne, group chief executive, British Petroleum Company, 50; Professor A.C. Fabian, FRS, astronomer, 50; Miss Ruth Gipps, conductor and composer, 77; Mr Jimmy Greaves, broadcaster and football correspondent, 58; Mr Eddie Hemmings, cricketer, 49; Commandant Dame Marion Kettlewell, former director, WRNS, 84; Mr Mike Leigh, dramatist and director, 55; Professor Donald Longmore, cardiac surgeon, 70; Lord McNally, 55; Dame Mona Mitchell, Lady-in-Waiting to Princess Alexandra, 60; Mr Phil Neal, former footballer, 47.

Mr David O'Dowd, former Chief Constable, Northamptonshire, 56; Sir Frederick Page, FRS, former chairman, Aircraft Group, British Aerospace, 81; Dr V. Payne, former Headmistress, Malvern Girls' College, 58; Mr Sidney Poitier, KBE, actor, 71; Vice-Admiral Sir Cameron Rusby, 72; Professor R.A. Weiss, FRS, former director, Institute of Cancer Research, 58; Lady Wharton, 64; Mr Barry Wordsworth, conductor, 50.

Middle Temple

The following have been elected Honorary Masters of the Bench of Middle Temple: Mr Philip Lader, American Ambassador; Mr John Birch, Organist and Director of the Choir, Temple Church, 1922-97.

The following have been elected Masters of the Bench of Middle Temple: Mr R.W. Stewart-Smith, Mr N.J. Forwood, QC, Mr C.J.M. Symons, QC, Mr J.S. Thrower.

Appointment

Museum of London Professor Wendy Davies, FBA, has been re-appointed as a Member of the Board of Governors of the Museum of London for a further term of three years.

University news

Edinburgh University The following will receive honorary degrees during the 1998 graduation ceremonies at Edinburgh University.

Honorary Degree of Doctor Honoris causa: Mr Peter Stein, theatre and opera director; Sir Richard Sykes, FRS, chairman, Glaxo Wellcome; Sir Alexander Trotman, chairman of the board, Ford Motor Company. The Very Rev Gillesbuig Macmillan, Minister of St Giles, Edinburgh; Professor Sir Kenneth Murray, FRS, Professor of Molecular Biology.

Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science: Professor Emeritus Peter Higgs, retired professor of Theoretical Physics.

Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws: Professor Emeritus Anthony

Church news

Appointments The Rev Hilary Hanke, Vicar, Worsley (with responsibility for St Mary and St Francis Belle Vue) (Worcester); to be also Convener for Women's Ministry (same diocese).

The Rev Peter Lawley, Team Vicar, Central Telford with special responsibility for All Saints Stinchley (Lichfield); to be Vicar, Priors Lee St Georges (same diocese).

The Rev Julia Maurant, NSM Curate, Harlow St Mary and St Hugh w St John the Baptist (Chelmsford); has been appointed Assistant Adviser for Continuing Ministerial Education (same diocese).

Prebendary David Nash, Vicar, Winchmore Hill St Paul (London); to be Rector, Monkton Hadley (same diocese).

The Rev Ian Pallett, Rector, Morton and Stonebroom (Derby); to be Priest-in-Charge, Heanor (same diocese).

The Rev Brian Pierce, Team Vicar, Manningham St Mary Magdalene and St Michael and All Angels (Bradford); to be Vicar, Tipton St John the Evangelist (Lichfield).

The Rev Neil Purvey-Tyler, Team Vicar, Gamcock with responsibility for West Chesham St Aidan (Lichfield); to be also Assistant Rural Dean of Rugeley (same diocese).

The Rev Christopher Rankine, Assistant Curate, Alverstoke (Portsmouth); to be Assistant Curate, Romsey (Winchester).

The Rev Stuart Robertson, formerly Chaplain, St Petersburg, Russian Federation (Europe); to be Chaplain, Warsaw, Poland (same diocese).

The Rev Scott Sanderson, Vicar, Newport St Mary the Virgin (Chelmsford); to be Vicar, Walton le Solon (same diocese).

The Rev Christopher Scott, Rector, Esler (Guildford); to be Rector, Bude Haven and Marhamchurch (Truro).

The Rev John Suddards, Rector, The Upper Clove Parishes of Great Yeldham, Little Yeldham, Stambourne, Tilbury-juxta-Clare and Toppesfield (Chelmsford); to be also Rural Dean of Hindford (same diocese).

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Adam Black, publisher, Edinburgh, 1784; Honoré Daumier, artist, Paris, 1808; Dame Marie Rambert, founder of the dance company bearing her name, Warsaw, 1888.

DEATHS: Aurangzeb, Mogul emperor of India 1658-1707; Ahmednagar, 1707; Robert Peary, arctic explorer, Washington, 1920; Sir Hugh Allen, musician, Oxford, 1946; Sir Leonard Woolley, archaeologist, London, 1960; Percy Grainger, composer, White Plains, New York, 1961.

Defeat of the Dutch fleet under Admiral Van Tromp by Admiral Blake off Portsmouth, 1653.

Austria declared herself bankrupt, 1811.

The steeple of Chichester Cathedral was blown down, and the Crystal Palace was badly damaged during a great storm, 1861.

Lord Louis Mountbatten was appointed the last Viceroy of India, 1947.

John Glenn became the first American to orbit the earth three times in Friendship 7, 1962.

Dinners

Army Board Mr George Robertson, Secretary of State for Defence, was the host at an Army Board dinner for the "Friends of the Army" held yesterday at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

Among other present were: The American Ambassador, the Canadian High Commissioner, Sir Robert Fellowes, the Hon Michael Pateman, Admiral Sir Peter Abbot, General Sir Roger Wheeler, Chief of the General Staff, General Sir Alex Hogg, Lord Goring, General Sir Brian Kenny, General Sir Michael Walker, Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Hayman-Jones, Sir Gordon Jackson, Sir Michael Jackson, Sir John Chisholm, Mr Max Hastings, Mr Stephen Herwood, Mr Chris Huhne, John Mason, Mr Joe Pilling and Mr Kevin Smith.

Association of Consulting Engineers Mr Simon Murray was the principal guest at the annual dinner of the Association of Consulting Engineers held last night at the London Hilton on Park Lane. Mr Raymond Cousins, chairman, presided. Dr Colin Niven also spoke. During the evening Dr James Smith, Master of the Engineers' Company, named Mr Neil Francis as Young Consulting Engineer of the Year.

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BIRTHS Mrs Williams - On February 9th at the Portland Hospital, to Nicola (née Brown) and Robert Williams, a sister for Andrew and Hugo.

DEATHS CHADWICK - Arthur John Chadwick, on February 18th after a long illness, surrounded by love and care after a long illness, aged 72, beloved husband of the late Mary, a devoted mother and devoted father of Gill, Tim and Duncan.

DEATHS COLSON - On February 17th at the Maida Vale Hospital, to the late Douglas Colson and his beloved wife of 40 years, the late Mary, a devoted mother and devoted wife of Douglas, aged 72.

DEATHS DE GARCIA GOFF - Victoria on 17th February in the French Consulate, Rome, Italy, aged 81, after a long illness, surrounded by love and care after a long illness, aged 81, beloved wife of the late John, a devoted mother and devoted father of Gill, Tim and Duncan.

DEATHS HENRIKSEN - On February 15th after a long illness, surrounded by love and care after a long illness, aged 69, beloved wife of the late John, a devoted mother and devoted father of Gill, Tim and Duncan.

DEATHS HOGGERS - John Robert on Tuesday February 17th at home, aged 87, beloved husband of the late Mary, a devoted mother and devoted father of Gill, Tim and Duncan.

DEATHS STRICK - Timothy Alexander Strick, on February 17th at home, aged 52, beloved husband of the late Mary, a devoted mother and devoted father of Gill, Tim and Duncan.

DEATHS WILSON - On February 15th at the Portland Hospital, to Nicola (née Brown) and Robert Williams, a sister for Andrew and Hugo.

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Advertisement for PERSONAL COLUMN featuring various services like BIRTHS, DEATHS, MEMORIAL SERVICES, TICKETS FOR SALE, WINTER SPORTS, FLIGHTS DIRECTORY, TUITION & COURSES, FLATS/SHARE, SITUATIONS VACANT, SENIOR EDITOR, UK HOLIDAYS, and WINTER SPORTS.

OBITUARIES

CLARE DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND

Clare Duchess of Sutherland, once chateleine of Dumrobin Castle in Scotland and of Sutton Place near Guildford, died in a London nursing home on February 17 aged 94. She was born in Calcutta on June 12, 1903.

Clare Josephine O'Brien was a fair, slim-waisted beauty with lovely skin, who was privately a talented pianist. She was of Anglo-Indian stock, being the second daughter of Herbert O'Brien of Calcutta. She married three times.

Her first husband, whom she married in 1922, was Alexander Blake Shakespear, CIE, a merchant living in Calcutta, a partner of the firm of Begg, Sutherland and Co. and secretary to the Upper India Chamber of Commerce from 1905 to 1912.

Clare's second husband was Lieutenant-Colonel Vincent Ashford Blundell Dunkerly, DSO, JP, 13th/18th Royal Hussars, of Knightsbridge, with whom she had a son, Michael. In March 1944 this marriage was also dissolved, on the ground of Clare's adultery with George Granville Sutherland-Leveson-Gower, 5th Duke of Sutherland, KT, PC, JP.



The Duke and Duchess of Sutherland in March 1950

House) in The Mall, Lilleshall in Shropshire, Trentham in Staffordshire, and the romantic Dumrobin Castle at Gosport, the largest house in the northern Highlands and the most northerly of Scotland's great houses. But he also loved fun, and did little to ensure that his great inheritance passed to the next generation in good condition.

Clare Dunkerly was already a familiar figure at Dumrobin in the early years of the Second World War, during which she was the duke's first wife, Lady Ellen Butler, was suffering from asthma. Duchess Ellen died on August 24, 1943, and less than a year after her death she was married Mrs Dunkerly.

The story reached the American gossip columns and there was some correspondence between the Duchess of Windsor and her lawyer, the outcome being that as the wife of a brother of the Sovereign, the Duchess of Windsor took precedence over normal duchesses, regardless of the date of creation.

LANCE IBBOTSON

Lance Ibbotson, CBE, former general manager of British Railways Southern Region, died on February 6 aged 88. He was born on February 10, 1909.



MANY still regard Lance Ibbotson as the best chairman British Rail never had. Had the measures he proposed been agreed by Whitehall nearly thirty years ago, the lives of thousands of commuters into London might have been transformed.

In an effort to win more support at Westminster, he invited all MPs with constituencies in Southern Region to a special presentation of his plans. To his bitter disappointment, however, only a few turned up - and these seemed more concerned about the charges for the gentlemen's lavatories at Waterloo.

No-one could question Ibbotson's technical knowledge or administrative skills, and during his tenure he managed to improve Southern Region's finances by more than £9 million a year. But the Government failed to back his great modernising scheme, and he retired in 1972, after 45 years on the railways, with his dreams only partly fulfilled.

Lancelotti William Cripps Ibbotson was born in South London, the son of an ear, nose and throat surgeon. His forebears included the Sheffield master cutlers, Ibbotson Brothers. His childhood was marred by his parents' separation after the First World War, in which his father had served at Jutland as a naval surgeon.

After enduring the rigours of boarding at Radley, he emerged from school at a time when jobs were scarce. It was through a patient of his father's that he was taken on as a traffic apprentice with the London and North Eastern Railway in 1927.

munitions throughout the northeast - while coping with air raids and extensive bomb damage.

Ibbotson climbed the ladder, enlarging his reputation as a determined moderniser, transferring to Western Region under the nationalised British Railways in 1950. He became general manager of Western Region and chairman of the Western Railway Board in 1966, then two years later was moved to the parallel post with Southern Region - the greatest managerial challenge in British Rail.

While Ibbotson failed to win all the investment he wanted for Southern Region, he did much to improve efficiency and morale. The new signalling system at London Bridge was pushed through - after convincing Whitehall of the "social cost benefit" in getting commuters to work on time.

He was less successful, however, in arguing the case for a fast rail link between Feltham and Heathrow Airport. After retiring from BR he worked for a few years in private industry, including a spell as an enthusiastic director of Flameless Furnaces, 1976-84.

ed, dedicated professional who carried out regular inspections - always ensuring that he arrived when least expected. His combative, reforming zeal did not always go down well with his superiors - which might explain why he never made it to the topmost rung - but he always attracted great loyalty from subordinates. He treated all his railwaymen with respect, never passing a porter without saying "good morning" or shaking hands.

He liked to scale mountains literally and metaphorically, scrambling up Sca Fell without stopping while in his sixties. A decade later he went round the world on his own, while in younger days he had played tennis against his teenage children wearing boots as a self-imposed handicap.

Lance Ibbotson, who was an active Christian Scientist, married his first wife Joan, a school friend of his sister's, in 1931. She died in 1989, and the following year he married his second wife Rhoda, a family friend and herself a widow, who survives him with a son and daughter from his first marriage.

ROBBIE JAMES

Robbie James, former Welsh international footballer, collapsed during a soccer match and died on February 18 aged 40. He was born on March 23, 1957.

AT THE age of 16, Robbie James spent a month on loan at Arsenal. It was the opportunity of a lifetime, but James rejected the chance of a permanent transfer because of homesickness. Instead, he became

an underrated but integral member of the Swansea City side, managed by John Toshack, that climbed from the old fourth division to division one in four seasons.

James's contribution, whether as an attacking presence in midfield, or as a robust defender, was seldom contentious but it was always wholehearted. Supporters warned to his bravery in the tackle and his hustle, and if this detracted from his more creative mo-

ments then his overall value went unquestioned by colleagues.

For a heady period at the start of the 1981-82 season, their first in the top flight, Swansea introduced a sense of suspended reality into proceedings by heading the English league. They won 22 points from their first ten games and, after a hiccup in form, reclaimed first place in December when James scored two goals in a victory against

Aston Villa, the reigning champions.

They failed to finish in sixth place, their lowest position of the season, and relegation came the following year. However, Swansea had struck a blow for smaller clubs everywhere. They emphasised, too, that the FA Cup does not hold the monopoly on romance, contrary to the myth repeated lazily every January.

Robert Mark James was born in Gorseinon, West Glamorgan. He joined Swansea on schoolboy terms and began his career as an amateur, fitting in football between duties as an apprentice electrician, before committing himself full-time.

Harry Gregg, the Swansea manager, played a major role in convincing the young James that he could forge a decent career as a professional. Gregg gave him a debut at 16 in the final game of the 1972-73 season and James became the youngest player to appear in 200 league games.

James was capped 11 times at youth level and appeared three times for the Under-21 side before he was called into the senior squad by Mike Smith. He made the first of 47 international appearances for Wales in 1979 and scored seven goals. He featured alongside the likes of Ian Rush, Mark Hughes, Kevin Ratcliffe and Neville Southall but, despite the emergence of a generation of talented individuals, Wales could not secure a place in the World Cup finals.

When Swansea slipped into division two in 1983, James was torn between loyalty to the club and offers to continue his career at the higher level. After much thought he signed for Stoke City for £160,000.

When he dropped into non-league football in 1994 he had made 782 appearances and scored 128 goals; only Peter Shilton, Tommy Hutchison and Terry Paine have accumulated more league goals.

An unhappy period as player-manager of Merthyr Tydfil followed, but James stood on the verge of success in a similar position at Llanelli FC with the side today second in the Welsh League. Selecting himself only because of injuries elsewhere in the squad, James collapsed and died 30 minutes into a game against Porthcawl.

He is survived by his second wife, Karen, a son and two daughters.



PERSONAL COLUMN

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LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES. TO PLACE NOTICES FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE TELEPHONE 0171 680 4878.

THE SEARCH FOR FRANKLIN. To: Mr John Ballenden, Red River Settlement Lachine, June 21.

ON THIS DAY February 20, 1850. In 1845 Sir John Franklin led an expedition to force a passage through the ice of northwest Canada. For years its fate was unknown despite many searches.

Help for the disengaged

Training and enterprise councils aim to interest the people who have given up learning, says John O'Leary

When the Conservatives were swept from power last May, many could foresee problems for the 79 training and enterprise councils (TECs). Labour had not always looked kindly on Margaret Thatcher's business-dominated attempt to improve Britain's skills base, and were expected to channel much of their work through elected bodies.

Nine months on, however, there is little sign of the TECs' role diminishing. Their £1.7 billion budgets are intact and David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, has assured the councils that they have a key role to play in delivering the Government's Welfare to Work programme.

Even the unexpected demise of this month's promised White Paper on lifelong learning has not dented the TECs' confidence. The Government's plans were expected to incorporate many of the proposals which form the basis of the councils' agenda for the coming years, but Chris Humphries, chief executive of the Tec National Council, sees official endorsement as postponed, not withheld.

"We were hoping for a document that would provide us with an overarching strategy so that we were working to a common set of principles and objectives, which the public was aware of," he says.

"But we have set out our view of what that strategy should look like and there has been no change of government policy. It may have been a lost opportunity at this stage, but a consultation exercise should eventually produce greater clarity and involve a wider audience."

The outline of government thinking is now due to emerge in a Green Paper on Wednesday. It will be surprising — and cause no little consternation — if it does not endorse the

main recommendations of the Tec's report last May. Based on the Labour manifesto commitment to "learning entitlements" for all young people, it aimed to increase adult participation in formal education or training by 50 per cent each year.

Although a highly ambitious target, the councils believe that nothing less will guarantee future economic competitiveness. Although public and private organisations' use of training has



Chris Humphries: clarity

increased markedly since Tec's were established at the start of the decade, a participation rate of perhaps 16-18 per cent by British adults in some form of learning compares poorly with the 50 per cent achieved in some Scandinavian countries.

Mr Humphries sees a particular problem in the high proportion of "disengaged" adults, who remain untouched by gradual improvements in employment and education rates.

TECs in Gloucestershire, Northumberland and St Helens, in Lancashire, have already piloted learning credits, providing loans and enabling adults to save for career-enhancing courses. Everything from basic literacy and

numeracy to an MBA qualifies, and more than 40 per cent of participants have become consistent savers in some areas, pointing the way to the continuing involvement in learning that the scheme is designed to produce.

Attempts are already being made by the Tec's through the Newstart programme to integrate the disengaged into the world of work. A variety of approaches, mainly concentrating on vocational courses with a clear prospect of continued employment, are being tried out. Like many of the Tec's ventures, the aim is to produce a set of successful models for others to adapt, rather than a single framework.

Among those in work the Tec's are focusing particularly on employees in small and medium-sized firms, where access to training is often most difficult to secure. They also have a demanding brief in the further expansion of modern apprenticeships, which are considered one of their most successful initiatives.

However, the councils' agenda is not confined to the shopfloor. Mr Humphries and his colleagues number improved management training among their top priorities.

"There is no doubt that a shortage of potential managers is holding back growth, particularly in small companies," Mr Humphries says.

Life has not been all plain-sailing for the Tec's. Two succumbed to financial difficulties, and even this month the National Audit Office was critical of the financial controls in some councils, citing over-payments of more than £14 million in 1996-97. But with the Labour Government's hopes for the future pinned on education and training, the councils are likely to be given even more responsibility when ministers give them "strategic guidance" later in the year.



Darren Fellowes helps young guests to get to know one of the locals in Woburn Safari Park, where hard work earned him an apprenticeship

DARREN FELLOWES was so keen to get a job at Woburn Safari Park that he worked Saturdays, Sundays and school holidays for eight months feeding and cleaning out animals, Rodney Hobson writes.

Then, when he left school last June at the age of 16, he joined the staff full-time under a modern apprenticeship, with Bedfordshire Tec funding his training. Now he works in pet corner, caring for penguins, sheep, goats, pigs and other animals that appeal to young children.

He is training towards NVQ level 2 in the care of small animals, a course that

Animal magic for trainee

has been specifically tailored to his job. After that he starts level 3 in animal welfare and management, covering feeding, exercising and transporting animals, maintaining their living conditions and learning about relevant laws.

Mr Fellowes is just one example of how Tec's are helping people to improve their skills.

Keith Newham found that Kent Tec could be equally helpful. Williams Medical Supplies, a distributor of medical products based near

Dartford, was looking for a young person with the right attitude and training to work in its warehouse.

As Julian Dobson, the warehouse manager, explains: "Keeping track of more than 25,000 medical products is no easy job and we needed somebody who already had a level of competence, including IT skills. More importantly, we wanted someone who would be quickly up and running and part of the team."

The search led to Mr

Newham, who joined as a warehouse assistant on a traineeship organised by Link Training and Kent Tec. During his four years with the company Mr Newham, now aged 20, has taken NVQ levels 2 and 3 in warehousing and is taking a modern apprenticeship in administration.

He was recently promoted to assistant warehouse manager and says: "Without the traineeship, it is unlikely I would have got the job. Four years ago there were few opportunities."

Steven James has a similar story of support from Kent Tec at a Dartford company. Like Mr Newham, he got a job four years ago, in his case with Brown Brothers, motor factors. Since joining he has moved up the promotional ladder from trainee to become one of only three department managers.

He says: "The company gave me the first opportunity to prove myself. Getting your first job is the hardest and the traineeship gave Brown Brothers the confidence in my commitment to hard work."

He has completed NVQ level 1 and 2 in retailing and is working towards level 3.

"A first class opportunity..."

"Through my local Training & Enterprise Council and my training college, I'm learning a variety of skills as well as engineering for my NVQ qualification. Everything I've learned through vocational training has helped me be better at my job and my career is definitely on the right track!"

James Pittam is a trainee with European Passenger Services. On an engineering Modern Apprenticeship Scheme through his local Training & Enterprise Council, he attends Newham College part-time and works on Eurostar trains running regularly from London to many European cities.

£600 million is lost in profits each year by London companies who do not invest in staff training. Don't be part of the statistic.

London's Training & Enterprise Councils
Working together for people and businesses in London
0171 735 6000

Advice on tap for the acorns

The failure rate among small companies is notoriously high. And yet they are seen as the engine for future growth and the main means of keeping unemployment down. Larger companies are becoming more efficient and hiring fewer people.

Entrepreneurs trying to turn an enthusiastic start-up into a sustainable, expanding long-term proposition find that one ingredient in short supply is good, affordable and relevant advice. Big consultancy firms and management consultants are far beyond the cheques of most small businesses.

Since 1994 the Government has offered a Business Links programme to make good quality advice available "on tap" to small businesses. Business Links are now run as partnership exercises between local Tec's, chambers of commerce and, usually, local authorities. They provide

subsidised services across a wide range of business disciplines — from accounting and marketing through to IT and design — in a form which is right for the client.

John Saunders, the co-chairman of the Business Links National Forum, says: "The new Government is very supportive of what we are doing. It has looked hard at our performance and the message was, basically: 'You're doing well but you're not yet perfect'. The outcome was that we have been given an agenda of 18 'action points' to improve our performance. But the single most important requirement is to act in a way which is closer to the audience we serve. We must become more entrepreneurial."

One of the problems faced by Business Links has been the apparent overlapping and duplication of support agencies for small businesses. According to some critics, it has

So what have the Yorkshire and Humberside TECs done for us?...

BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS

"We have developed our business using the Investors in People model, as a result of which our staff have a clear sense of direction in terms of their own objectives and in meeting the company's rapid expansion plans."

Nick Cragg, MD - Nicholas Associates, Rotherham.

HELPING NEW BUSINESSES

"We are very appreciative of the support we've received from the TEC. We would not have been able to grow at the same pace without that help."

Bill Shelton, Managing Director, Axiam, Bradford.

CREATING A SKILLED WORKFORCE

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Train or be damned

Ever since the rise of mass unemployment in the early Eighties, public policy has been filtered, despite the best of intentions, with failed initiatives in the field of training. Each new initiative - from YOPs and YIS to the Community Programme - was launched with a flourish and proceeded to spiral down in public confidence. The solution? Launch another one.

One of the most important tests for new Labour, therefore, is to end this record of failure. Ministers have made it clear that its Welfare to Work programme and particularly the "new deal" must set a precedent for quality in publicly funded training.

Fortunately, unlike any government before it, new Labour has an ally in the newly established Training Standards Council (TSC). Set up under the chairmanship of Nick Reilly, the chairman of Vauxhall Motors, the council gets down to work in the spring. Mr Reilly says: "Work-based training is the critical factor for a successful lifelong learning strategy which in turn is a critical area for improvement in the UK economy. We need to ensure that it is delivered at the highest level, consistently, in employers across the country. The work of the Training Standards Council will aim to

Standards supremos aim to root out the cowboys, says Edward Fennell



Nick Reilly, chairing the Training Standards Council

- The seven aspects of Training Standards Council inspection are:
- Training and assessment
 - Trainees' achievements
 - Trainee support
 - Management of training
 - Resources
 - Equal Opportunities
 - Quality Assurance

identify the good and the poor provision, to improve and grow the former and to eliminate the latter."

In the course of the next few years, therefore, hundreds of training organisations in England will find themselves coming under scrutiny if they are involved in publicly funded programmes. That means not just programmes for the unemployed but also those supported in part with public money, such as the Modern Apprenticeship aimed at high-achieving school-leavers.

Drawing inspiration from the myriad other inspection bodies in the public sector - such as Ofsted and the Further

Education Funding Council - the TSC will provide the rigorous external scrutiny that has been lacking in the past. Or as Mr Reilly put it recently: "Any good process or organisation requires an external element to check quality, focus on improvement, pass on the best to the not-so-good and identify wrongdoing where it exists or where it could occur."

David Sherlock, the chief inspector of the TSC (whose headquarters will be in Oxford), is determined that the council should play a vital role as a catalyst as well as a watchdog on performance. "We have to ensure that the experience of each trainee is of

good quality; that he or she gets good instruction, good support and a good outcome. No one should pretend that all is well. There are quality improvements to be grasped."

There are signs that the general quality of youth training in particular has been improving in recent years. The TSCs have become more astute in their judgments about which organisations are providing good-quality programmes. Equally, however, the past few months have seen the exposure of substantial cases of fraud and, embarrassingly, qualifications issued to trainees have had to be withdrawn.

Mr Sherlock is confident that fraud is not routine but the fact that it exists at all is symptomatic of a system that has been slack in the way it has policed standards. Almost incredibly, there has never been a consistent standard applied to training providers. One of the breakthroughs for the TSC is that, for the first time, there will be a specified framework for the inspection of training providers. Based on seven aspects (see box), the framework provides both a means of self-assessment by the training organisation and a focus for the investigatory work of the TSC's inspectors. The intention is that organisations will be steered by the framework to "clean up their



Nic Wood, a young entrepreneur and Sheffield Hallam University design student, examines one of the products that his company, Pewter Designs, offers. "Sheffield Tec's programme gave me invaluable advice," he says

act and keep it that way" (as Mr Sherlock puts it) before the inspectors arrive on their doorsteps.

The aim is not that inspection should be a one-off event," Mr Sherlock insists. "Instead, organisations should become committed to a process of continuous improvement us-

ing the framework as a means of evaluating performance."

One of the problems is the scale of the task of inspection. Although there are many large national training organisations, these are more than matched by small outfits which move in and out of training provision, using it as

a sideline to their main business.

To deal with this mountain of inspection, Mr Sherlock has just 20 full-time inspectors. Admittedly they will be supported by several hundred part-time inspectors, but the arithmetic means that organisations can expect to be

inspected only about once every four years.

"There is a mood of austerity in the air," says Mr Sherlock. "Government wants good value for money as well as good value for the people who take part in these programmes. We are here to ensure that they get it."

Out of work, unskilled, unemployable

With London and the South East leading Britain out of recession, the seven training and enterprise councils in the capital fear that the skills shortages which paradoxically accompany falling unemployment are hitting their area hardest.

The capital seven have banded together to form the London TEC Council, hoping that their combined weight will have a greater impact on the problem. Earlier this month, they met to thrash out a response. They called for closer collaboration between Tec, local government, further education and training

providers, including the establishment of a London Development Agency.

Judith Rutherford, the council's director, says: "Our research shows that the city's residents frequently lose out in the job market to better qualified commuters. At the same time, London's businesses are demanding a more highly trained workforce."

"We expect that the proposals we develop will tackle chronic skills gaps in the London labour market and be adopted as part of the training agenda of a new London Development Agency."

Local Futures Group, an economic and research consul-

tant, suggests that Tec should concentrate on creating long-term local jobs and businesses that are not detrimental to the quality of life in the area.

Providing electronic information services would enable local businesses to help each other and to create an identity for each area. Tec should consider creating a standard to promote the commitment of employers to the regeneration of communities.

However, Local Futures Group pointed out that if London is to develop as a global skills centre, then its Tec must build links on a regional and national basis. Research over the past two

years has revealed that £600 billion is lost in profits each year by London companies through lack of investment in staff training.

This year's survey indicates that companies employing up to 25 people are particularly affected by the skills shortage. Three quarters of construction companies and two thirds of distribution and catering companies said that up to 60 per cent of staff lacked the skills to do their jobs properly.

The main area of deficiency was in familiarity with computer packages. This confirmed a finding last year that skills shortages are worst in clerical and secretarial posts.

Small businesses are unable to offer salaries that are competitive with those offered by larger companies. But competent clerks and secretaries are essential to lift administration work off the shoulders of owner-managers as new businesses start to grow.

This year's survey is likely to confirm the 1997 findings, when one in five firms complained that lack of skills was holding back expansion. About a third of all Londoners have no higher qualification than the basic NVQ level 1. Among the unemployed, 29 per cent lack even this.

Yet 78 per cent of firms reporting high labour turnover last year had no definite strategy to reduce the problem, so it is hardly surprising that the transport, distribution and catering sectors were complaining of labour turnover problems again.

Unemployed Londoners without skills are likely to stay that way, despite the 250,000 job vacancies in the capital. Employment and promotion are more likely to go to those living outside London. More than 60 per cent of commuters have NVQ level 3 or higher, compared with 52 per cent of Londoners.



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NEWS

Masons' battle with Parliament

The leaders of Britain's Freemasons were involved last night in a struggle with Parliament after being ordered by MPs to hand over names of members allegedly involved in a series of police scandals.

The Masons risk being charged with contempt of Parliament if they continue to defy the demands of a powerful select committee to produce the information. Pages 1, 2

Hip firm to pay for replacements

The firm that made the hip implants withdrawn because of their high failure rate pledged last night to pay for re-examining all the patients involved and replacing faulty implants. The decision came as the surgeon who first noticed that the hips were failing too often said the firm abused him for being incompetent when he reported his findings. Pages 1, 4

Anthrax arrests

Two white supremacists were arrested in Las Vegas, accused of a plot to release anthrax spores into a public place, possibly the New York subway. Page 1

Blair's demand

Tony Blair told Kofi Annan to demand written guarantees from Saddam Hussein that he would not obstruct UN access to any weapons sites. Pages 1, 16, 17, 21

Cambridge swots

A century of tradition on the Cam comes to an end today after a victory for Cambridge dons who want students to spend more time in lectures. Page 2

'Portrait' of a prince

Prostitutes procured by an English madam and drinking games were part of an extraordinary portrait of the dissolute lifestyle of a playboy prince, outlined in the High Court by his former London emissary. Page 3

Sad primaries

Standards are unacceptably low at a third of primary schools in the "leafy suburbs", the first national analysis of schools by pupils' background showed. Page 6

Trouble at law

Calls for advocates' robing rooms to be made unisex, so abolishing the last male preserve at the Bar, are causing the biggest stir since women barristers were permitted to wear trousers. Page 8

German men's libido on the slide

German males are losing interest in sex, according to academic researchers reporting to the German congress of psychotherapists in Berlin. The news emerged on Weiberfastnacht, the day of the carnival season when women in Roman Catholic regions traditionally snip off the ties of their colleagues and bosses in a castration ritual. Page 14

A policewoman's lot

A police inspector was suspended by senior officers to stop her making allegations about sex discrimination, an industrial tribunal ruled. Page 5

Days of their youth

The early 1970s were magical times for Steve King and his wife, Sue. They were summers of love, of loon pants, kaftans, Soft Machine — and a blue, 1951 Ford Anglia. Pages 9, 21

Postman's fear

A postman's worst fears seemed to be coming true when he was confronted on his rounds by a 100 lb rottweiler, the Court of Appeal was told. He was not to know that the giant family pet simply wanted to play. Page 11

Horrors remembered

A former prisoner of war wept in a Tokyo courtroom as he relived the horrors of a Japanese labour camp. Page 12

Bonn set for EMU

Germany is sure to qualify for European monetary union and will easily meet the 3 per cent debt target which seemed for many months to be wriggling out of Bonn's grasp. Pages 14, 21

Washington minefield

The White House has entered a political minefield, trying to cite executive privilege as a partial shield for President Clinton's senior aides. Page 15



The Archbishop of Canterbury and James Wolfensohn, World Bank president, at Lambeth for a poverty and development conference

Economy

Eddie George, newly re-appointed Governor of the Bank of England by the Government, hinted strongly that he would continue to oppose a further rise in interest rates. Page 27

Departures

Two directors of City Mortgage Corporation, which is being investigated by the Office of Fair Trading, have quit. Page 27

De La Rue

The banknote printer warned the stockmarket that operating profits would fall by 33 per cent. Page 27

Markets

The FTSE 100 index fell 4.9 points to close at 5785.5. Sterling's trade-weighted index fell from 105.1 to 104.8 after a fall from \$1.6413 to \$1.6348 and from DM2.9865 to DM2.9820. Page 30

Football

Brian Laudrup will join Chelsea on July 1 when his Rangers contract expires. Chelsea are also pursuing the French international Didier Deschamps. Page 32

Rugby union

Dick Best, the former England coach, returns to the Premiership with London Irish, who dismissed Willie Anderson as their director of rugby. Page 48

Winter Olympics

They are playing our tune in Nagano, but Britain is not responding. Whenever a telephone call is put on hold in the Olympic city, a rendition of Bolero rings out. Page 46

Cricket

Mark Ramprakash will pick up his bat competitively for the first time tomorrow, the fifth day of England's tour of the West Indies. Page 48

Dream ticket

"How do we build an exciting, sustainable operating life in our capital?" Richard Morrison asks the question and supplies the answer. Page 35

Game and set

Fresh from collecting his Olivier award for Cinderella, Lez Brotherston is putting the finishing touches to The Hunchback of Notre Dame. Page 35

Top pop

David Sinclair reviews the best of the week's new CD releases, including the underrated Lisa Loeb; plus new jazz albums and Van Morrison live in Brighton. Page 36

Oh, George

Michael Jackson allowing Beatles songs to be used to fly cars is bad, says Caitlin Moran, but wait till you hear about George Martin. Page 37

Soft sell

Nicholas Foulkes looks at fashionable cushions, brushes up his plumping and finds out why a stuffed square placed corner-down is social suicide in interior design circles. Page 18

Hype hoory

London Fashion Week is about bold newcomers and outrageous designs, says Grace Bradberry. But who will be forgotten in a fortnight and who is the next Alexander McQueen? Page 19

Learning zone

A special report on the work of Training and Enterprise Councils. Page 19

Front lines

How journalists are getting ready for another Gulf War. If it happens, will they manage to get nearer to the truth this time? Page 38

Hitting back

Thomas Sanction, co-author of Death of a Princess, has harsh words and counter-arguments for all his critics in the British press. Page 40

The French consume far far too many medicines

This compulsive desire is doubly damaging, both in health terms and economically. Nothing justifies this situation which to a great extent is the cause of the chronic disequilibrium in the health insurance account. — Le Monde

Preview: Alan Tichmarsh returns with more horticultural advice. Gardeners' World (BBC2, 8.30pm). Review: Peter Barnard tries to do the sums at Tesco. Pages 50, 51

The best policy

Past critics of Mr Dobson, including this newspaper, should pay tribute to his honesty with some of their own and admit that he has proved an altogether more impressive Health Secretary than we first allowed. Page 21

Grace and failure

Not only is it bad manners to denounce a visiting statesman when he is a guest receiving an honour; it is a foolish tactic. Page 21

Old hippies never die

Most of us have musical selves which, like brightly coloured insects, burst out gloriously for a brief few years and then remain pinned in stasis for the rest of our lives. Page 21

MATTHEW PARRIS

William Hague is lucky. Fate has sent him the right row, with the right man, on the right issue, at the right time. Page 20

JOHN LLOYD

We may soon have our first post-Diana war, and the public relations themes which will keep our support going for this venture are now being tested. But how is a nation which grieved for the Princess and dedicated itself to honour her example in ridding the world of landmines to be readied for zapping the Iraqis? Page 20

PETER RIDDELL

At stake in electoral reform is the balance between party bureaucracies and voters and the scope for independent-minded MPs to be elected. Page 10

Ciara Docherty of Sutherland; Robbie James, footballer. Page 23

"Pensioner task force": Tories and EU; attack on Iraq; special needs schools; youth justice; arts funding; millennium bug. Page 21

1, 5, 10, 13, 25, 32. Bonus 48. Three shared the £3.7m jackpot

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,720

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-29 indicating starting positions for clues.

- ACROSS: 1 Expose to sunlight, perhaps, in line in seaside area (6). 4 Ring given to girl — might that dry her tears? (8). 10 As an aid to grooming, atomiser needs to get hot first (9). 11 Get heated and keep hot in restaurant (5). 12 Produced a jet and flew to harbour abroad (7). 13 Banking later in manoeuvre (7). 14 Big wave on perimeter — one interrupting the current (7-7). 19 Pigment used by portrait painter, say, for a standard-bearer (6-5). 21 Novelty as all the players doubled except West? (7). 24 Glass that can't stand going in drier (7). 26 Muslim legal expert in civilian clothes (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,719

CARD SHARP BEBOP L U T R A O E ARGUE OBEISANCE S B V U C I A L SHYNESS ELLIPSE I D E D A R F O R G O O D M E A S U R E Y O R T I S SUPERCONTINENT I A N A B B L E D B A B Y L O N D H A D U E Q O V E R S P I T T L R A V E R U A S S A N E A R O D E C M O R S E P L A Y

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Motorway. Europe Country by Country. 0336 401 885. European fuel costs 0336 401 886. French Motorways 0336 401 887. Spanish Motorways 0336 401 888. Channel Ports 0336 401 889. Le Shuttle 0336 401 895.

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SOUNDS OF BARRIERS. Sun start 7:05am. Sun set 5:24pm. Moon set 11:11am. Moon rise 1:48am. New moon February 28. London 5:24 am to 7:03 am. Bristol 5:34 pm to 7:13 am. Edinburgh 5:27 pm to 7:26 am. Manchester 5:25 am to 7:15 am. Penzance 5:49 pm to 7:22 am.

General: the western finges of England and Wales will have late sun, but east Wales and much of southern and eastern England will have hazy sunshine. Northern Ireland and western Scotland will be windy with rain spreading from the west. Most of eastern Scotland will be dry and mild. Tonight eastern parts of England will have rain. London, SE, Cent S&N England, E Anglia, E&W Midlands, Channel Is: after early mist a very mild day with long spells of sunshine. Moderate S wind. Max 18C (61F). E, NW, NE England, Lakes, Is: sunny after a dull start; wind S, moderate to fresh. Max 13C (55F). SW England, S&N Wales: dull but mild with sunny breaks in the east. Wind S, fresh. Max 14C (57F). Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland: cloudy with rain later. Wind S, strong to gale. Max 13C (55F). SW, NW Scotland, Glasgow, Cent Highlands, Argyll, Orkney, Shetland: rain. Wind S, strong to gale. Max 12C (54F). N Ireland: outbreaks of rain. Wind S, strong to gale. Max 13C (55F). Republic of Ireland: patchy rain. Wind S, strong, becoming W, moderate. Max 12C (54F). Outlook: R will be colder with showers in many places and some snow on northern hills. This south will have some sunshine on Sunday.

Table with 4 columns: City, Sun, Rain, Max, Min. Lists various UK cities and their weather forecasts.

Table with 4 columns: City, AM, HT, PM, HT. Lists various UK cities and their temperature forecasts.

Temperatures at midday local time on Wednesday. X = not available.



Changes to chart from noon: High A builds and moves steadily E as it extends towards Bay of Biscay; lows E, F and G combine and deepen as new low heads for Norway.

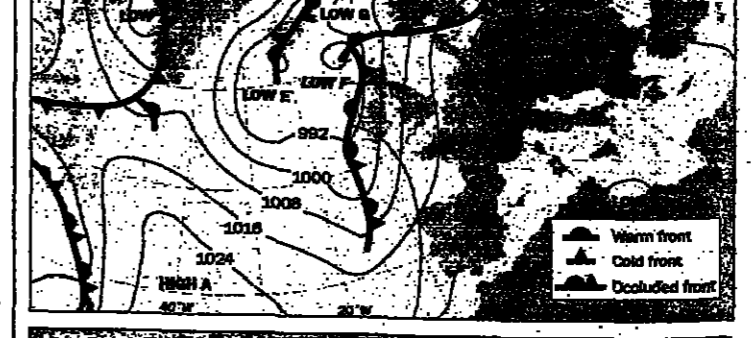


Table with 4 columns: City, AM, HT, PM, HT. Lists various UK cities and their temperature forecasts.

Copyright reserved. All times GMT. Heights in metres.

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Llanymyneir (Mer), Colwyn Bay (Conwy), and Doona Nook (Lincolnshire), 14C (57F); lowest day temp: Clacka (Glasgow), 9C (48F); highest rainfall: Sky (Isle of Skye), 0.7in.

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Advertisement for a book titled 'Governor suggests rates may not rise'. The text is partially obscured by a large graphic of a man's face.

THE TIMES

INSIDE SECTION
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TODAY



BUSINESS
Simons puts
Kwik Save in
his basket
PAGES 31



ARTS
Sets please, he's
British: the genius
of Lez Brotherston
PAGES 34-37

MEDIA
The Iraq crisis:
how journalists
prepare for war
PAGES 38-41

**TELEVISION
AND
RADIO
PAGES
50-51**

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 20 1998

Somerfield dominates £1.45bn merger with Kwik Save

BY ERASER NELSON
SOMERFIELD yesterday agreed a £1.45 billion merger with rival Kwik Save in a deal that creates a two-headed supermarket chain that the partners hope will soon overtake Safeway.

by Somerfield directors. Graeme Bowler, Kwik Save's 60-year-old chief executive, is to retire with a lump sum of £1.29 million. The discount chain's other directors are not being offered redundancy packages and are instead being invited to continue their roles below boardroom level.

He said the enlarged company is well-positioned to challenge Safeway for fourth place, after Tesco, J Sainsbury and Asda. "We are already the fourth largest supermarket for packaged goods in many respects, and we will be growing all the time." The combined group has sales of £6.21 billion against Safeway's £6.59 billion.

Kwik Save's head office in Prestatyn, North Wales, is to be shut, putting 150 jobs at risk. Mr Simons said he had no idea how many jobs will actually go. He said the first casualties will be in the distribution division, and said both companies will be run from Somerfield's head office in Bristol.

interim. The Somerfield offer of seven of its shares for every six Kwik Save shares gives its shareholders a 62.5 per cent stake in the enlarged company. Somerfield will also pay a final dividend of 7.0p, in addition to the special interim expected from Kwik Save. This values Kwik Save at £544 million — a 20 per cent premium against its closing value last Friday.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FTSE 100	5718.5	(-4.9)
Yield	2.84%	
FTSE All share	2647.24	(-1.55)
Russel	16616.48	(+2.59)
New York		
Dow Jones	8403.48	(-17.58)
S&P Composite	1030.33	(-1.75)
US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	103 1/4%	(104 1/4%)
Yield	5.86%	(5.82%)
LONDON MONEY		
3-month Interbank	7 1/4%	(7 1/4%)
Life long gilt	123 1/2%	(123 1/2%)
future (Mar)		
STERLING		
New York	1.5355*	(1.5370)
London		
DM	1.5249	(1.5413)
DM	2.3824	(2.3865)
FF	2.3955	(10.0360)
Sfr	2.4071	(2.4097)
Yen	206.71	(207.43)
£ Index	104.8	(105.1)
DOLLAR		
London		
DM	1.8237*	(1.8220)
FF	5.1125*	(5.1045)
Sfr	1.4705*	(1.4713)
Yen	126.25*	(126.45)
£ Index	108.7	(108.8)
Tokyo close Yen	125.84	
MORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (May)	\$15.30	(\$15.35)
GOLD		
London close	\$297.95	(\$297.65)

Governor suggests rates may not rise

BY JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR
EDDIE GEORGE, the newly reappointed Governor of the Bank of England, yesterday strongly hinted that he would continue to oppose a further rise in interest rates.

rate rise would probably be needed if the Government were to hit its inflation target. Mr George said that he had never said that there would be another rate rise. He said: "That [a further rate rise] is the implication of the forecast in the Inflation Report. But the forecast is not a straight-forward ready reckoner: that is what it says, that is what we should do."



David Steene resigned a week after CMC was forced to abandon its extortionate lending policy

Two directors quit City Mortgage Corporation

BY GAVIN LUMSDEN
TWO directors of City Mortgage Corporation, the troubled lender under investigation by the Office of Fair Trading, have quit.

borrowers. However, analysis of CMC's first mortgage securitisation by Duff & Phelps, a credit rating agency, shows 17 per cent of CMC's borrowers were more than three months in arrears last July.

Glaxo slip blamed on high pound

BY PAUL DURMAN
GLAXO WELLCOME, which plans to merge with SmithKline Beecham to form the world's largest pharmaceuticals group, does not believe it will be able to restore margins to the 41 per cent level achieved at the height of the success of Zantac, its blockbuster ulcer drug.

Liberty cancels payout and gives profit warning

BY PAUL DURMAN
LIBERTY, the London department store company that is currently without a managing director, a finance director or any City advisers, yesterday cancelled its dividend after dismal January trading.

EU could block fast tunnel link

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT
ATTEMPTS to save the Channel Tunnel fast link by Railtrack and Bechtel, the US construction group that is a shareholder in London & Continental Railways, may fall foul of European law.

EU could block fast tunnel link

European Commissioners have demanded full details of proposals to be submitted to ministers next week, amid fears that they may make a legal challenge to the plans.

De La Rue asks Marshall to resign



BY CHRIS AVRES
JEREMY MARSHALL, the man who has literally held a licence to print money for the past eight years, was yesterday asked to resign from his position as chief executive of De La Rue, the banknote and security printer.

about £30 million less than last year's £90.5 million. The company also said it would halve this year's dividend to 12p, because of a decline in cash generation.

£120,000 worth of shares in De La Rue, plus options worth about £272,000. Mr Marshall began his career at Ciba then joined Hanson, where he stayed for 16 years. He left in 1980 to join pre-privatisation BAA.

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Tempus page 30

Optimism at G7 aids currencies

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS
CORRESPONDENT

ASIAN currencies rose sharply yesterday as optimism increased that the G7 will issue a strong statement calling for market intervention to help ailing currencies.

The Asian problems will top the agenda in London this weekend, with traders anticipating a communiqué announcing concerted currency intervention to conclude the meeting.

The communiqué is also expected to suggest measures to stabilise the battered Indonesian rupiah and end speculation that Indonesia will introduce a currency board.

Surin Pitsuwan, Foreign Minister of Thailand, also revealed that Asian countries will press the European Union for a new fund to stimulate trade and investment in the region.

The idea is likely to be floated at the April meeting of Asian and European ministers in London.

The Malaysian ringgit climbed 2 per cent to 3.72 to the dollar as did the Thai baht to 44.00 to the dollar.

The Indonesian rupiah rose 5 per cent to 8,600 to the dollar despite confusion over the currency board idea.

The situation in the country remains tense with sporadic rioting due to rising food costs reported in several cities.

Economic View, page 31

Intel comes to Samsung's aid as Daley gives Korea warning

From Oliver August in New York



Daley: honour contracts

SAMSUNG, the Korean conglomerate, and Intel, the world's largest microprocessor maker, are set to form an alliance. Intel is negotiating a significant investment in Samsung to help it overcome financial difficulties.

Intel is one of the biggest customers of Samsung Electronics, the world's largest memory chip maker. Samsung said: "Topics in the negotiations include a capital injection by Intel and a stable memory supply by Samsung and others."

Intel already has a 10 per cent stake in Samsung Austin

(Texas) Semiconductor Inc, Samsung Electronics' American subsidiary. An Intel stake in the parent company would emphasise the trend of increasing consolidation in the computer industry.

Samsung's desperate search for foreign investors is a direct result of the Asian financial crisis which has undermined its domestic market and weakened the order book. Samsung Motors, the car arm, is already negotiating a capital injection by Ford. Samsung said the Ford talks will take another few months.

The disclosure of the Intel

talks comes as other US companies are worrying about their Korean investments.

J.P. Morgan, the Wall Street bank, filed a lawsuit in New York this week to force Boram Bank of Korea to pay \$180 million (£109 million) it owes.

A Seoul court ruled earlier this month that Boram Bank did not have to pay up because J.P. Morgan had not warned it about Asian currency and interest rate shifts.

William Daley, the US Commerce Secretary, has now stepped into the row. During a

trip to Korea he said all Korean companies must honour their contracts with American companies and could not hide behind their country's financial crisis.

He also warned Korea that it must open up its economy to foreign trade, especially in the car sector where imports account for only 1 per cent of sales.

Mr Daley said: "I want to make it clear, Korea cannot use the financial crisis as an excuse to delay implementing market access commitments or as an excuse to raise new barriers."

WorldCom's results lift last MCI doubt

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

STRONG financial results from WorldCom have removed the last doubts over the US telephone group's \$37 billion (£22 billion) takeover of MCI. Attempts by GTE, a takeover partner of BT last year, to outbid WorldCom are now doomed, according to Wall Street analysts.

WorldCom reported fourth-quarter net income of \$136 million (£83.4 million), up from \$120 million in 1996, along with a revenue increase of 62 per cent, to \$2 billion.

WorldCom's share price has risen 8 per cent in the past

week and is now more than 25 per cent above the level that would trigger a reduction of its MCI offer. GTE had hoped to prevent the tie-up and bring BT back into the deal. WorldCom thwarted BT's \$24 billion takeover of MCI in October.

WorldCom said that it will continue investing in 1998 in "local, international, Internet and data services". WorldCom is set to rival AT&T, America's phone behemoth.

During the fourth quarter, WorldCom's international revenues increased 56 per cent, to \$238 million.

Talks are confirmed at Filofax

FILOFAX, the personal organiser maker, yesterday confirmed it had begun talks over possible disposals, joint ventures and other initiatives after shares surged by 22p to 184½p, their highest level for more than 18 months (Kathy Lipari writes).

The 13 per cent leap followed an 8p rise on Wednesday.

A statement issued by Filofax stressed negotiations were at a very early stage.

Pre-tax profits in the six months to September 30 grew by 9 per cent to £2.2 million. Projected earnings of £6.6 million before tax are expected for the full year.

Brown & Jackson lifts profits 130%

BY OUR CITY STAFF

BROWN & JACKSON, the discount retailer that owns What Everyone Wants, Poundstretcher, and Your More Store, boosted its pre-tax profits by 130 per cent, to £13.2 million, in the six months to December 31 on sales up from £111 million to £154 million.

Earnings per share rose from 4.6p to 8.9p. There is no interim dividend. The shares rose by 3p, to 47p. The group traditionally suffers a loss in its second half, but Christo Wiese, the chairman, said that after initiatives taken last year

the losses for the group would be marginally less than a year ago.

Like-for-like sales at Poundstretcher slipped by 3.2 per cent. Mr Wiese said that the board was encouraged by the progress to date, but added: "There is still a great deal to be done."

Since the half-year end, the group has closed a further eight outlets and disposed of the leases. Two further properties were acquired for £1.5 million, and six more were sold for total proceeds of £3.2 million as part of the restructuring programme.

Hugo Boss sales top one billion marks

HUGO BOSS, the German fashion house, said that sales rose above one billion marks (£335 million) for the first time last year and that profits climbed solidly. Boss said 1997 sales climbed 14 per cent to 1.136 billion marks with net profit 8 per cent higher at 82.3 million marks. The company, which mainly sells men's fashions, said shareholders would benefit from the improved results, receiving a 63 mark dividend per share, up from 45 marks in 1996. Under the direction of Joachim Vogt the company has expanded its traditional market base, adding a women's line.

Boss has seen strong growth in recent years from its decision to split its product lines into three distinct groups — Boss for traditional buyers, Hugo for younger, more adventurous buyers and Baldessarini for top-line customers. The company said last week that it planned to award a global licence for shoes bearing its Hugo brand to MH Shoe AG of Switzerland, in a bid to expand into the youth market.

Aerospatiale splits

AEROSPATIALE, the French state-owned defence and aircraft manufacturer is splitting itself into separate companies ahead of the planned creation of a European aerospace company. Aerospatiale is spinning off Aerospatiale Airbus, which will team up with its European partners, including British Aerospace, to form a limited company, Aerospatiale ATR will form a separate company with its Italian partner while the defence business will be formed into separate subsidiaries.

Bourne End's £9m buy

BOURNE END PROPERTIES has exchanged contracts to buy a 91,000 sq ft retail and office centre in Nuneaton from BAA for £9 million, to be satisfied through the issue of 847,458 new ordinary Bourne End shares and £8.5 million in cash. The 1960s complex, known as the Abbegate shopping centre, has 77,000 sq ft of covered retail accommodation and 14,000 sq ft of offices. Abbegate currently produces a total of £870,000 net annual rental income, reflecting 9.3 per cent net initial yield.

Qantas lifts earnings

QANTAS, the Australian airline, raised first half profits to a net A\$165.3 million (£70.3 million) from A\$156 million despite a one-off charge of A\$27.5 million. Sales in the six months to the end of December rose to A\$4.15 billion from A\$3.97 billion. Earnings rose from 14.54 cents to 14.86 cents out of which an unchanged dividend of 6.5 cents will be paid. Qantas said the impact of Asia's economic problems will be more significant in the second half of the financial year.

Siebe in £64m US deal

SIEBE, the engineering group, said it had agreed to acquire Coleman Safety & Security Products from the Coleman Company Inc for £64 million cash subject to appropriate regulatory clearance. Siebe said this purchase would be financed through existing credit lines. It added that during the 12 months to January 31 Coleman Safety generated an operating profit of £7.6 million on sales of £53.2 million. Net tangible assets at January 31 were £17.5 million.

Ewart opposes offer

EWART said it rejected the revised offer from Dunlop House, the rival property group, and that it is holding talks with a consortium interested in making an offer for the company. Dunlop House announced yesterday that it had increased its offer for Ewart to 75p a share from 67p. In a letter to the company's shareholders, Ewart's board said it rejected the revised offer and advised shareholders not to return the form of acceptance to Dunlop House.

PW wins Liffe contract

THE London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange (Liffe) has hired the consultancy arm of the Price Waterhouse accountancy firm to be in charge of its systems integration. PW will oversee Liffe's introduction of screen-based trading, which is due to take place this year in an attempt to head off competition from Paris and Frankfurt. Neither side would say what the contract is worth, but up to 300 PW staff will work at Liffe for up to three years. City Diary, page 30

Renault cuts more jobs

RENAULT, the French carmaker, said that it proposed to cut 2,700 posts this year, entailing 1,200 internal transfers and 1,500 early retirements and other voluntary departures. "At the staff council meeting on February 19, Renault confirmed its intention to put in place a job plan for 1998 which is, however, less dramatic than that of 1997," the company said. A year ago, Renault announced plans to close a plant in Vilvoorde, Belgium, employing 3,100, and the loss of 2,764 posts in France.

Sciences rejects \$9bn bid

COMPUTER SCIENCES yesterday rejected Computer Associates' \$9 billion (£5.6 billion) takeover bid, saying the price was too low and the combination does not make business sense. It said the \$108 per share offer did not reflect the company's full value. Analysts said Computer Sciences would fight the bid as long as it could unless a rival bidder emerges. The computer support services company also said it would lose business if it lost its independence. (Bloomberg)

Skillsgroup in the red

SKILLSGROUP, the information technology training and recruitment company, incurred a loss of £16.3 million before tax for the year to November 30 from the previous year's £14.3 million profit. Skillsgroup took a £27.2 million write off for previous acquisitions disposed of during the year. The final dividend rises 21 per cent to 2.9p taking the total dividend up 15 per cent to 4.2p. Skillsgroup's shares rose 8p to 246½p.

Bre-X chiefs knew of gold scandal suspicions

BY OLIVER AUGUST

A NEW report on the Bre-X gold mining scandal shows executives at the Canadian group knew of irregularities at its fraudulent Indonesian field.

The report was compiled by Forensic Investigative Associates, a Toronto firm of private investigators, and was commissioned by Bre-X.

Investors lost \$4 billion (£2.5 billion) last year when it emerged that Bre-X's geologists had "salted" rock samples by adding gold particles. The report says employees in Canada had voiced suspicions early on and that the behaviour of John Felderhof, the former chairman, was "curious in the extreme".

The report attempts to shift most of the blame to Michael de Guzman, the head of the Indonesian operations, who died around the time that the fraud was discovered. Mr de Guzman was said to have fallen out of a helicopter.

The investigators' findings seem to support the theory that Mr de Guzman committed suicide because he knew the game was up when independent auditors arrived in Indonesia. It reveals that he had made a previously unknown suicide attempt the night before his death. He is said to have drunk a whole bottle of cough medicine before trying to drown himself in a bathtub.

The report was distributed by Deloitte & Touche, Bre-X's trustees in bankruptcy, but Deloitte said it did not endorse the report. Canadian police said they would continue their own investigation.

Mr Felderhof, who has been living in his luxurious home in the Cayman Islands since the scandal broke last spring, has denied any knowledge of or involvement in the salting.

The 434-page report described in exhaustive detail haphazard methods of transporting and storing core samples before testing, and Mr de Guzman's purchases of gold from local panhandlers.

The group said that it lent money secured on "an unusual but important collection", adding that there has been a delay in bringing it to market and prices had fallen.

Though Christie's will not identify its client art sources suggested the collection is owned by Barbara Pitscheck-Johnson, the home products heiress, who owns a Raphael

Christie's makes provision on loan

BY JASON NISSÉ

CHRISTIE'S International, the auctioneer that terminated takeover talks this week, has made a £5.3 million provision against a loan to a customer because of the fall in the value of the client's art collection.

The group said that it lent money secured on "an unusual but important collection", adding that there has been a delay in bringing it to market and prices had fallen.

Though Christie's will not identify its client art sources suggested the collection is owned by Barbara Pitscheck-Johnson, the home products heiress, who owns a Raphael

among other works. The group was also hit by a £1.7 million write off at Spink, its art and coin dealing operation, largely because of write downs on Asian art.

In spite of these problems, Christie's pre-tax profits rose £1.4 million to £35.3 million. This was largely because of the Ganz and Loeb collections — £180 million of paintings, largely modern art including Picassos and Cézannes.

Earnings rose slightly to 12.9p and a final dividend of 4p makes a total of 5.4p (4.75p).

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.55	2.55
Austria Sch	21.25	21.25
Belgium F	44.25	50.80
Canada \$	2.99	2.99
Canada C	0.16	0.16
Denmark Kr	11.34	11.05
France F	6.55	6.55
Germany Dm	5.14	2.90
Harbo Kong	499	457
Italy L	13.49	12.29
Japan Yen	130	110
Netherlands Gld	1.25	1.18
Spain Ptas	6.58	6.65
Switzerland Sfr	2.10	2.07
Taiwan N	221.55	204.00
UK £	0.58	0.54
USA \$	3.44	3.21
New Zealand \$	2.95	2.71
Norway Kr	13.01	12.05
Portugal Esc	317.25	285.00
S Africa Rand	6.78	7.82
South Korea W	233.75	214.00
Sweden Kr	14.05	12.82
Switzerland Sfr	2.28	2.34
Taiwan N	377.18	357.25
USA \$	1.74	1.69

Notes: For small denominations rates only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to transfers by cheque. Rates are at close of trading yesterday.

Tempus, page 30

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سكزا من الاجل

Familiar pattern at Liberty's



COMMENTARY

by our City Editor

Strollers down London's Regent Street should tread carefully. From the elegant wood-paneled boardroom of the Liberty department store, mud is being slung, along with the odd kitchen sink.

The team that successfully ousted Denis Cassidy in what, for once, was a truly extraordinary general meeting just before Christmas is now indulging in the familiar practice of painting the blackest possible picture of the scene of battle. The previous management, apparently, was not merely totally spendthrift but was actively frightening customers away.

The revelation that trading profits were down in each of the last six months, and "significantly" so in January, is almost triumphant in tone. There would, inevitably, have been some pain from the absence of Asian tourists, who exhibit an inexplicable enthusiasm for Liberty's tullest prints on everything from photograph frames to notebooks, but it is difficult to see why the company should have fared so much worse than other London department stores. The January sales were a time of celebration for them.

It would not take a Sherlock Holmes to harbour a sneaky suspicion that those with a different agenda might have found a more positive spin to put on the

figures. And can it really be the case that Denis Cassidy, not a newcomer to commerce, committed Liberty to a £43 million refurbishment scheme without securing the finance to complete it? That is what the incomers would have us believe, but the facts are slightly different. The redevelopment plan may be unnecessarily ambitious for a business with a market capitalisation of well under twice that amount, but Barclays had agreed, in principle, to fund it and it was on the strength of that agreement that Cassidy and his colleagues pressed the start button.

The financing document remained unsigned because of the row which then erupted between the major investors, led by Brian Myerson, and the board. We have yet to learn of the new strategy that those investors wish to see implemented. They have put in former Bass finance director Philip Bowman as chairman but the company still lacks a few of the elements usually considered important in corporate life. Apart from bankers, brokers and lawyers, Liberty is without a finance director or a

chief executive. The last may be easily solved. If the company waits just a little longer, one Stuart Rose should have collected his £500,000 or so from AOL, after it is swallowed up by GUS, and be raring to make up the next challenge. A small signing on fee — say £250,000 — should ensure that he refuses other offers.

Can slimy chickens lay golden eggs?

In the days before Gateway became Somerfield, the business had an unimpressive reputation for staleness. The saga of the slimy chickens was one which did not go down well with some inspectors and sometimes the company's interpretation of sell-by dates erred on the generous.

At first glance, the plans for Somerfield's get together with Kwik Save seem to be at the other end of the freshness scale, as if they are still being cooked up and are not yet ready for public consumption. This, however, may have more to do with presentation than with fact. Mergers demand a little diplomacy. The effort involved on that front is, in theory at least, compensated for by the economic advantages. But if there are to be any real benefits to investors from the coming together of two weaklings in the grocery business it will only be if the stronger of the two is in charge.

Today's Somerfield has come a long way from the slimy chicken days. The Gateway stores that have been converted to the new name and format produce better returns and margins which, though nowhere near those of the

sector's leaders, are now heading towards 4 per cent. While the Kwik Save formula is out-dated and friendless, losing market share fast, it may be that some of those stores could convert to the Somerfield formula.

Where customers have the choice, there is no reason to suppose that they will opt for Somerfield instead of the market leaders but, even if its long-term future is one of decline, a larger Somerfield, courtesy of Kwik Save conversions, should enjoy advantages over a smaller one.

Across the group, there will be immediate cost savings. The suppliers will resist, but extra buying muscle should squeeze out better prices. Head office costs will be cut. The extent of the benefits will depend on how brutal David Simons can be in demonstrating that, whatever the fine words say, this is a

takeover masquerading as a premium merger. The Somerfield chief executive has good reason to want to make the deal work and, since his finance director will be the one he has worked with at Somerfield, the scope for argument will be limited.

From inflation nutter to People's Governor

Relieved of the sleepless nights waiting for Gordon Brown to decide on his reappointment, Eddie George has been reborn as the People's Governor. The man who many of us dismissed as the Bank of England's inflation nutter in chief has turned thrillingly into the champion of workers and mortgage payers.

It is hard to remember a time when Mr George has argued so eloquently and forcefully against a rise in interest rates. Let his reputation as a man who cares little about growth and jobs for ever be buried. Before the Treasury committee yesterday, Steady Eddie couldn't have put on a more convincing display of

why he was always the right man for the job.

Mr Brown's Monetary Policy Committee seems to be maturing nicely, too. The inclusion of outside economists in the policy-making process appears to have been liberating. Mr George and Mervyn King, the Bank's chief economist, are much less buttoned up than they used to be and, despite current differences of opinion on rates, there are indications of an easy collegiate atmosphere on the MPC.

One thing about Eddie will not change: his stubborn streak. If he has decided against a rate rise, he will fight tirelessly until he wins the other members of the MPC around to his view. Outsiders may have been foisted on him by the Chancellor but it is still his Bank of England.

Light falls

HARDLY has the ink dried on the Hampel report, than Thorn Lighting Group has acted on one of its recommendations, paying non-executive directors partly in shares. Though rare, this move is not unique, having been adopted by SmithKline Beecham among others. But as Thorn's share price currently stands at 99p, 16p less than the flotation price two years ago, the award of shares may not be entirely welcomed by their recipients.

Shares in Sleepy Kids dive

SLEEPY KIDS, the merchandising company owning the Duchess of York's *Budgie the Little Helicopter* cartoon series, yesterday said it needed emergency funding to put its two latest projects into production (Chris Ayres writes).

The company, whose new creations are *The Disguisables* and *Ticking Fuster*, said it was considering selling some or all of its rights library, and looking to raise equity funding with a strategic investor or shareholders. It said it would report "a significant loss" for the year. The shares dived 4 1/2p, to 7 1/2p.

Martin Powell, chairman of Sleepy Kids, said: "It was always envisaged that additional funding for full series production would be required before the company could commit to the overall production budget of £3.3 million."

Bae remains silent on Orange stake

BRITISH AEROSPACE failed to satisfy the stock market's appetite for the sale of its £865 million outstanding stake in Orange, the mobile phone company, yesterday but succeeded only in adding another 11p to Orange's shares at 349p.

Bae shares rose 18p to £18.48 after Sir Richard Evans, chief executive, announced a rise in pre-tax profits from £456 million to £596 million in 1997. The 1997 figure excludes the £330 million cost of stopping production of the Jetstream 41 turboprop aircraft.

Turnover rose from £6.46 billion to £7.9 billion. The closing order book was a record £22.1 billion.

Spending on defence rose from £553 million to £598 million. When the effect of accounting changes were stripped out, the profit margin dropped from 10.4 per cent of



Evans: increased profits

turnover to 10.1 per cent. The Matra Bae Dynamics joint venture was yesterday chosen by the Australian Government as preferred supplier for short-range air-to-air missiles.

Commercial aerospace losses improved from £78 million to £20 million before the exceptional Jetstream charge. Bae owns 20 per cent of Air-

Provident Financial pays out

SHARES in Provident Financial, the cash-rich door-to-door lender, jumped 13p to 918 1/2p yesterday after the company announced it was planning to return £93 million to shareholders by way of a 35p special dividend (Gavin Linsden writes).

The Bradford company, which charges 14 million borrowers up to 353 per cent APR (annual percentage rate) on its small loans, had planned to buy back 17 million shares to reduce a growing cash pile. However, a surge in its share price since the summer meant the company had only bought 5.8 million at a cost of £33.5 million.

The special dividend is on top of a final dividend for 1997 of 11.75p bringing the total for the year to 19.5p, up 18 per cent. Pre-tax profit rose 15 per cent to £136.5 million, with earnings per share, boosted by the buyback, up 19 per cent to 34.77p.

Biotech setbacks hits quadrant

QUADRANT Healthcare is blaming the rash of recent biotechnology setbacks for the disappointing price of its shares in the placing that brings the company to the stock market.

Nomura International, the investment bank, opted to cut Quadrant's placing price to 130p when two knowledgeable investors said they would not support the flotation at 150p. Mungo Park, Nomura's head of corporate finance, said it was better for Quadrant to raise £20 million at a lower price than only £15 million at 150p.

At 130p a share, Quadrant is valued at £58 million, less than three quarters of its original target last month of £80 million. The Cambridge company, which intends to use its sugar-based technology to improve drug delivery, set out with the hope of raising £30 million. However, its marketing period coincided with bad news from British Biotech and Biocompat-



Ross: sugar technology

Trocadero unveils £1.1m loss

JOHN CONLAN, the recently installed chairman of Trocadero, yesterday attempted to draw a line under its past woes by outlining a future as a focused leisure group (Dominic Walsh writes).

Unveiling a 1997 loss of £1.1 million, Mr Conlan pointed to the recent £10.5 million acquisition of five London bars and its ownership of the rights to the works of Enid Blyton as the way forward for the AIM-listed company.

He said the problems surrounding the Trocadero centre in Central London were being "aggressively" addressed.

The loss comes before £28 million of exceptional property losses and £2.5 million of reorganisation costs. The loss per share was 6.5p, compared to earnings of 0.16p in 1996, and there is no dividend.

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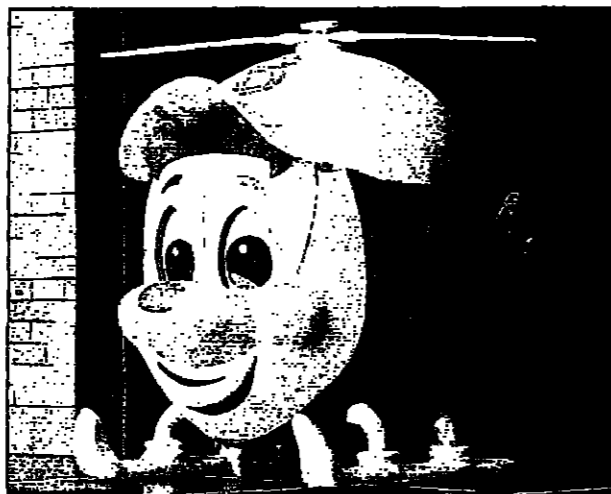
STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Stock Market Writer of the Year

Renewed support spells good news for Reuters

REUTERS appears to be regaining its composure after a difficult few weeks that saw the shares slump to their lowest level for three years. Last night, the international news agency and financial information group rallied 12 1/2 p to 630p...



Sleepy Kids shares were less animated than the group's Budget the Little Helicopter, ending 4 1/2 p lower at 7 1/2 p

Orange rose 1 1/2 p to 349p despite British Aerospace 18p dearer at £18.49, ruling out an early sale of its 21 per cent stake.

Kwik Save surged 4 1/2 p to 343 1/2 p as details of the proposed merger with Somerfield, up 38p at 299p, were unveiled. The deal has been sweetened for Kwik Save shareholders with a special dividend payment of 6p.

It was another helterskelter performance for the rest of the equity market. Shares rallied strongly from an early markdown as a fresh wave of bid speculation and some softer than expected January money supply figures cheered investors.

The banks remained a focal point, with Lloyds TSB dipping 18p to 930p on revised claims it is about to bid for Norwich Union, up 18p at 487p.

Allied Irish Bank stood out with a jump of 24p at 788p after a recommendation from Lehman Brothers, the broker, while speculative buying continued to drive Abbey National, up 12p at £12.97.

Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the broker, was pushing General Accident, 11p up at £13.33.

shares changed hands. The bank note printer has been in steady decline since winning the acrimonious battle for control of Portals. The shares have since dropped from a peak of £10.52.

Another company warning of losses for the year was Sleepy Kids, down 4 1/2 p to 7 1/2 p. The group complains it does not have sufficient money to fund production of two animation ventures The Disguisables and Ticking Funster. Outside help is being sought.

Henderson Crosthwaite, the broker, has pinned its colours to the mast at Supersec VR. The information and technology specialist responded with a jump of 8 1/2 p at 130p.

News of a bid approach lifted How Group 24p to 100 1/2 p. At these levels the engineer is capitalised at £42.4 million.

GILT EDGED: There was a swing back in favour of shorter dated issues. This followed the sell-off of the past few days on the back of some bearish comments by the Bank of England about interest rates.

In the futures pit, the March series of the Long Gilt slipped 1/16 to £123 1/16 in moderate trading that saw 56,000 contracts completed.

Among conventional issues Treasury 8 per cent 2021 was down 1/8 at £126 1/8, while at the short end Treasury 7 per cent 2002 finished 1/16 better at £102 1/16.

NEW YORK: Profit-taking saw Wall Street shares retreat in the morning session, with the Dow Jones industrial average falling 47.58 points to 8,403.48 by midday.

MAJOR INDICES

Table listing major stock indices from New York, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Amsterdam, Sydney, Frankfurt, Singapore, Brussels, Paris, Zurich, London, and others with their respective values and changes.

STOCK MARKET

Table listing various stock market movements including Athlone Extrusions, Bass B, Diageo B, Eurostar Energy, Monsoon, Richards Group, and Sanctuary Warrants.

MAJOR INDICES

Table listing major indices such as RISES, FALLS, and various international indices like Nikkei, Hang Seng, and others.

COMMODITIES

Table listing commodity prices for items like Cocoa, Robusta Coffee, Meats, and various oils.

LONDON FINANCIAL

Table listing London financial data including Long Gilt, German Govt Bond, Japanese Govt Bond, and various interest rates.

MONEY RATES

Table listing money rates for various banks and currencies, including Prime Bank Bills, Sterling Money Rates, and Local Authority Deposits.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS

Table listing European money deposits for various currencies and banks, including Dollar, Deutsche Mark, French Franc, and others.

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS

Table listing gold and precious metals prices, including Bullion Open, Kruggerand, and various metal prices.

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Table listing sterling spot and forward rates for various currencies and banks.

TEMPERS

Out of the money

DE LA RUE has suffered a stomach churning reversal of fortune since the early 1990s when demand for banknotes from developing economies and newly independent countries produced bonanza profits and a wildly inflated share price of nearly £11.

Although the passports and banknotes industry is undoubtedly oversupplied and cyclical, the market for labour-saving cash-handling devices and credit card magnetic strips should be producing healthy returns.

Richard Laphorne, finance director at British Aerospace, believes this is a time "to keep the company big". He reckons the pecking order in the restructuring of the aerospace and defence industry will have a lot to do with sheer physical brawn.

This gives BAE something of a dilemma. Its investment in Orange, the mobile phone group, has really taken off in the last month or so. It is now worth close to £900 million.

Bae wants to reduce its holding - and the recent gains have made profit-taking an attractive option. But a big sale would mean a lot of cash to add to the £761 million net it had at the end of 1997.

There would be strong pressure to return some of this to shareholders so Bae is only likely to sell when an attractive reinvestment opportunity has appeared.

In the meantime, Sir Richard Evans, the chief executive, is making more positive noises about US co-operation. Lockheed Martin would be the most attractive suitor but this is still unlikely.

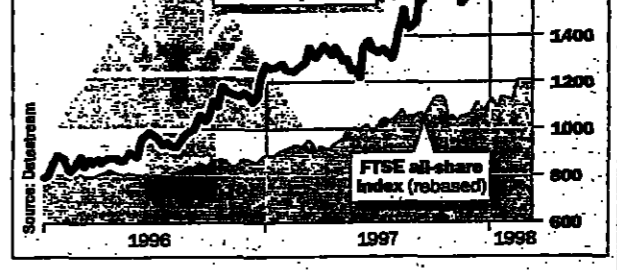
Chances are that the US option will be used as a stick to beat the recalcitrant state-owned European players into prompt action.

Bae's Asian exposure is small and any Gulf conflict is unlikely to hit Arab sales. The plane development repayments to the UK Government are not as manageable. Even without the likely benefits of European restructuring, Bae shares still look attractive at 1848p.

monetary union in the first wave, denying it lucrative contracts to print the euro. Those who already own shares in De La Rue face a tough choice. Although the shares fell 86 1/2 p yesterday, the p/e ratio is unchanged after the dramatic reduction in forecast profits. A surprise takeover bid still looks unlikely - it is hard to imagine that anyone would risk buying the company so soon after so many disappointments.

All shareholders have to look forward to a costly disposal programme and a new chief executive, who probably will not arrive until autumn. Meanwhile, the most promising area of De La Rue's business - its smart cards division - is unlikely to start contributing seriously to profits within the next two years. Even for patient investors, shares in this company look seriously risky.

STILL GAINING ALTITUDE



CHRISTIE'S International has been a public company for 25 years. And it could well be another 25 years given the collapse of talks with SBC Warburg Dillon Read to take it private earlier this week.

The problem, it seems, was price. Christie's thought it was worth £3 a share. SBC and its consortium of wealthy backers did not. On the evidence of Christie's full-year results, published yesterday, SBC is probably right.

Though Christie's had a strong year - largely because of the sale of two large modern art collections - the figures were held back by two provisions, one against a loan that Christie's made to a collector, another against Asian art held by Spink, the group's art dealing side.

These show the growing risks of the auction business, with Christie's and Sotheby's becoming increasingly willing to take art on their books to increase their profits. But this also increases their chances of losses.

Even after falling back to 25p, Christie's is trading on nearly 20 times historic earnings. However, the past shows the vulnerability of those earnings to even a minor recession in the volatile art market. The rating falls to 20x on a more conservative basis.

GLAXO Wellcome finally broke its long run of increasing earnings last year and it will struggle to make progress this year. But look beyond the loss of sales from Zantac and Zovirax and it can be seen that the company can approach a merger with SmithKline Beecham in robust health.

Once perceived as a one-product company, Glaxo Wellcome now has half a doz-

en big drugs that are growing rapidly to fill the hole created by Zantac's loss of patent protection. Stripping out currency fluctuations, its core drug grew by 49 per cent to £721 million. In HIV treatment, Epivir's sales more than doubled to £413 million; and Imigran for migraine has become the group's second-biggest seller after increasing sales by 31 per cent to £662 million. In all, products launched in the 1990s - Glaxo's over-generous definition of new - contributed sales growth of nearly £1 billion.

With plenty more potential coming out of the pipeline, the company's future earnings look secure, even on its own.

Of course, the shares have surged to a lofty £19.24 on the apparent benefits of SB. Strong though the prospects are, it would take a bold investor to buy at this level.

EDITED BY PAUL DURMAN

COMMODITIES

Table listing commodity prices for items like Cocoa, Robusta Coffee, Meats, and various oils.

LONDON FINANCIAL

Table listing London financial data including Long Gilt, German Govt Bond, Japanese Govt Bond, and various interest rates.

MONEY RATES

Table listing money rates for various banks and currencies, including Prime Bank Bills, Sterling Money Rates, and Local Authority Deposits.

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Tony Harris

Dark worries behind the IMF Indonesian travails

President Suharto has been threatened with the loss of the \$43bn rescue package

The face-off between the International Monetary Fund and President Suharto of Indonesia is at first glance incomprehensible. The President wants to underpin the rupiah (which fell more than 70 per cent between the start of the crisis last autumn and the end of last month) by setting up a currency board — an arrangement the Fund has approved elsewhere. Not this time. Citing "unacceptable risk", the Fund has threatened to cancel its whole \$43 billion (£26 billion) rescue package. But the President is holding on in spite of this threat, and has sacked the Governor of his central bank, who opposed the idea. These are deep waters, as Sherlock Holmes once remarked.

What is the row about? A currency board is a kind of dollar-based gold standard: the suspect currency is made convertible into dollars held in the reserves. In theory, this ensures that any loss of dollars automatically squeezes the domestic money supply — an automatic stabiliser. The system has in recent years worked very well, not only in strong Asian economies, but as part of the answer to Latin American crises; troubles arise only in the long term, and when domestic costs get out of line with the exchange rate sustained by the board.

So why should the Fund be so alarmed, and the President so pig-headed? The two plausible explanations shed much light on Asia's problems. A charitable one can be based on two views of the nature of Indonesia's crisis. But the nature of the Indonesian regime suggests darker worries. Officials will discuss this one only in private. The IMF plan aims primarily to solve a debt crisis, by providing the base for a long-term workout. But President Suharto has a more worrying corporate debt: the need for a quick fix for hyperinflation. Rising prices have provoked food riots, and could bring the whole body politic crashing down. And he has an economic guru, to tell him how: Steve Hanke, a Harvard-trained US economist who is the arch-enthusiast for currency boards. Hanke may well have convinced the President that he can restore confidence and stability at one stroke. He could then safely leave Indonesia's indebted corporations to negotiate their own salvation, with banks that will go a long way to avoid write-offs.

What is wrong with this attractive picture? First, the measured starting exchange rate of about 5,000 rupiah to the dollar, a devaluation of about 30 per cent from pre-crisis days. A currency board, like any other fixed exchange-



Michel Camdessus, IMF managing director, left, watches as President Suharto signs the IMF deal

rate regime, depends on credibility, as Britain discovered during its ERM membership. A 30 per cent devaluation of a currency already seen as overvalued before the crisis may not be seen as adequate in the financial markets — especially in a country where the regime is seen as not only incompetent but unstable. If the chosen rate were suspect, the new board would be lucky to last a week, and at the end of that week, the country could have virtually no reserves. Risky, indeed.

But the darker suspicion is that a demanding opening rate is a deliberate mistake: its aim is not to stabilise the currency, in the long term, but simply to purchase a few days' grace. The large corporations controlled by the Suharto family could pay off their dollar debts at a manageable exchange rate, before the rupiah finally collapses. A London credit analyst puts some unspoken IMF suspicions into words: "What you have to realise is that Indonesia is a kleptocracy — Zaire with a bit more civilisation. It is run entirely in the interest of the ruling family, who see their large domestic assets threatened with bankruptcy. A currency board could just be a device to enable them to raid the central bank's dollar reserves."

But would an IMF-approved austerity programme by such suspicions at all? Here we come to the heart of the Fund's Asian problems, and the reason why its whole programme for all the Asian crisis countries, and not just Indonesia, have been denounced by many economists. "The IMF's problem," a retired Fund official admitted, "is that whatever the disease may be, it only knows one cure."

The standard devalue-and-deflate formula worked very well in European crises under the Bretton Woods system, and in Latin America, because the need was to correct balance of payments problems caused by weak competitiveness, inadequate saving, and heavy government borrowing. But apart from rising costs (mainly in Korea), these were not the Asian problems. On the contrary, the "tigers" (except perhaps the Philippines) looked in the best of economic health.

On the official figures (and a sub-problem is that these figures are not highly trusted) all of them had robust growth, very high private savings, and budget surpluses. Inflation, in-

the counterpart of huge spending on North Sea oil development.) Why should strong economies run into crisis? Partly because of weak understanding in the markets; but mainly, in the Asian group, because of structural weaknesses. Corruption, crony capitalism, poor investment appraisal, and weak financial supervision would be troublesome in any economy. In the Asian group they were fatally combined with features which the IMF generally welcomes — high, indeed excessive investment, and open capital markets that encouraged unneeded and inflationary inflows of foreign capital. Worse, tiger banks were tempted by low foreign interest rates, especially in Japan, and their foreign borrowing triggered a chain reaction. After the initial crisis in Thailand, exchange rates — regarded till then as immutable — came under suspicion. The banks panicked to hedge their exposures, and caused immediate collapse.

A recession in the Asian economies was overdue even before the currency crisis, because of excessive new capacity and collapsing prices and margins in a whole range of industries, from electronics to textiles. Normally, interest rates fall in a sharp recession; but this time, thanks to the crisis, they have risen, and made things worse.

The last thing that is needed after a financial collapse of this kind is a fiscal squeeze, as the Japanese seem helplessly to have realised. The IMF is trying, in the name of confidence, to force all the Asian countries to repeat the Japanese policy error. This would not only deepen their recessions, but

worsen the credit crisis: lower demand and higher interest rates mean more bankruptcies. An odd way to boost confidence; the only good news is that not one of the crisis countries has yet complied with IMF macro conditions, whatever they may be promised.

It is easy, then, to see why the IMF's "remedy" may be just the wrong one; it is much harder to see what would work. There is no quick fix for corruption: history suggests that it vanishes only when the gangsters decide that effective law enforcement is in their own business interest. And "transparency", that other hallowed figure — "could be achieved only through an international auditing process for which not even a framework exists. There is no cure, in short, for bankers' insomnia but to avoid lending to countries whose regimes are questionable, and whose statistics look, at worst, like a mixture of loopholes and fiction."

But there is a silver lining: countries with heroic levels of private saving have no need for external capital. What they do need is sound and reliable domestic banks and capital markets to channel those savings into productive investment. This again can hardly be achieved overnight; but the problems of weak banks and capital markets should be manageable within a financially closed economy, as was pointed out in a thoughtful analysis from Lombard Street Research last week. This is the one the Japanese got right: the depression which might otherwise have resulted from an ill-timed fiscal squeeze was headed off by massive liquidity creation by the central bank. If the IMF succeeds in frightening the tigers out of the global capital market, it might yet achieve a sort of salvation.

same image merchants responsible for Diago and all those other aberrations are already dreaming of next winter's skiing break. In return for sticking yet another label on what was once the Dee Corporation. It then became, if I have this right, Isoceles, a highly leveraged buyout vehicle and a name that can still conjure up the cold sweats for some venture capitalists, so that one had to go. Personally, I could never see what was wrong with Gateway.

A WORTHY contribution to the transport debate arrives ahead of the May White Paper, advocating increased use of off-street car parks to control urban congestion. What is more, the provision by some local authorities of cheap parking on their own lots may actually make the problem worse, by encouraging people to use their cars. Oh, and they shouldn't let people park on the streets, either. The source of the work is our old fender-benders themselves, the NCP. Which provides full-price off-street car parks for a living.

Duty calls
NEXT time some fund manager starts moaning about the long hours, the stress, the sandwiches at the desk, re-

What Simons says goes as Somerfield consumes Kwik Save

Fraser Nelson on the man behind the merger of supermarkets

David Simons likes to remind people that he does not suffer fools gladly. "In fact, I don't suffer them at all," he said recently. "I can't abide 'yes' men. I like people who will debate with me, but don't flannel me." A glance at the post-merger Somerfield board suggests that, in the last three days of negotiations, Kwik Save's directors were far too amenable for Simons's liking.

In a nine-man board, there are only three from Kwik Save, and six from Somerfield, which amounts to an effective takeover. Simons is about to restructure the eighth company in his 28-year City career.

Although Kwik Save is widely derided by the City, it is just the sort of lame duck that makes Simons salivate. His CV reads like a chronology of financial cliffhangers in which this latest entry does not seem out of place.

Simons was just 21 when he became financial controller with Rolls-Royce in 1968. The company almost collapsed three years later, yet Mr Simons managed to survive when many around him were being sacked. At 25, he joined Empire Stores as a management accountant. After a further four years at Burton Group, he became financial controller of John Collier. He then helped to buy the underperforming retailer out from Hanson, and made a handsome return on the £30,000 he borrowed for his contribution to the deal.

At 37, he took control of finances at Toys 'R' Us — then a fledgling attempting to break the UK market. His reputation for making light work of the worst financial quagmires spread in the City, and he soon found himself rewarded with a relatively steady job — as finance director of House of Fraser. Two years later, he took the same position at Storehouse, where he was well-liked but described as "transparently ambitious" and pining to become a chief executive.

A headhunting firm heard that he had itchy feet. The order was specific: "It's got to be big, it's got to be messy and it's got to be retail," he told them. Their answer was Isoceles — parent company of Somerfield superstores and legendary as the most disastrous legacy of the 1980s.

In 1993, chief executive of Isoceles was one of the least attractive posts in the City. The company was formed from a £2.1 billion buyout, was amazingly geared and had walked straight into recession. It had been formed

through the acquisition of third-rate high street grocers, and soon lost ground to the likes of J Sainsbury and Tesco, then building edge-of-town stores.

With £1.2 billion of debts, it was avoided by every self-respecting chief executive. But it was big, it was retail, and it was exceptionally messy. More to the point, the financial rewards for success were huge. Simons would have the profile he needed, and was promised a multi-million pound payout if he could salvage anything good out of Isoceles.

By 1996, he had completed a complex financial restructuring that ring-fenced the Somerfield and Gateway stores from the rest of the company. It was hailed as a work of technical genius and in summer of that year, he succeeded in bringing Somerfield to the market. This completed a deal that had been thought impossible. He was handed £4 million for his efforts, which he ploughed into Somerfield's under-priced shares.

Despite this success, the City has long been wary of Simons. He had made his name as a financial wizard, but never as a retailer. His strength was in financial rescue, not brand manage-

ment, a point not lost on analysts, who were yesterday scouring the merger details in the hope of finding some fresh retail ideas.

The logic behind the takeover is, unsurprisingly, technical. Close down the head office, gang up on suppliers to command better prices and — hey presto! — £50 million of cost savings. Simons makes no apology. His concern is now trying to play down the concern that the merger is in fact a takeover that has consumed Kwik Save and its directors with scant regard for their future.

Sporting a pair of garish purple braces, he held court with the City yesterday, beside him a silent finance director. He refused to answer the nastier questions of the Kwik Save deal, claiming that he had "absolutely no idea" how many jobs are going to be lost.

There will be more Kwik Saves, he promised, after Somerfield sacrifices its Food Giants and Gateway stores. And as for the Kwik Save directors, there are really not many dead. "Coates, Hughes, Smith..." mused Simons. "There is a fourth. I know there is a fourth director." He shot a worried glance at Martin Gatto, who returned a vacant look.

His PR adviser quickly leaped through the pages of the merger document, leaving Simons in embarrassing silence as he racked his brains for the other director who had just lost his place on the board. After three painful minutes, the name was found: Graeme Bowler, until yesterday managing director and chief executive of the Kwik Save Group.



David Simons, left, and Martin Gatto, of Somerfield

BUSINESS LETTERS

Inflation strategy needs rethink as rate rise will fuel wage demands

From the Head of Economics at The Knights Templar School

Sir, With an underlying inflation rate of 2.5 per cent, precisely on target, and a Bank of England estimate of the long-term growth rate of productivity in the economy at a conservative 2 per cent, wage rates would surely have to rise faster than 4.5 per cent (the sum of those two figures) before there should be any serious concern about an impact on inflation. The Bank of England, however, is discussing further interest rate rises as a response to earnings increase of a mere 3.8 per cent in manufacturing and of precisely that figure, 4.5 per cent, in service industries. (report, Monday February 16). Does this not suggest that the Bank has lost sight of the main purpose of running an economy, which is to generate

Rejecting ecu for EMU is illogical

From Mr Mike Arkell

Sir, Running an international trading company at the sharp end of currency fluctuation gives a rare perspective on the reality of a common currency. For ten years we have used the ecu in European Union donor contracts, and have found that its "weighted basket" value functions well. Our sale price is stable whereas in buying we may alter the supplying EU country should fluctuations change our costings. The use of the ecu stabilises export transactions, and yet permits local economic flexibility with individual currencies adjusting to circumstances. Most of the arguments applied to the benefits of EMU such as stable costings on the Airbus project would be almost equally applicable if each partner used ecus.

The problem is simply that too few industrial majors have switched to using the ecu for a pan-European pricing system, so as a medium, it has failed to achieve critical mass. We have the potential to make the ecu as large as the dollar in international trade if the EU led the transition. To jettison the ecu in favour of economic and monetary union while risking the backlash of straitjacket economics is a false philosophy. Dedicated pro-Europeans such as myself are finding that cordial politics are clashing with logical economics.

Yours faithfully,
MIKE ARKELL,
Diak Technical Export Limited,
Diak House,
PO Box 45,
Southampton.

Just turn back the clock on lending policy

From Mr N. G. Gambier

Sir, I was startled by Peter Ellwood, the chief executive of Lloyds TSB, and your report of his "exploring ways of linking costs and charges to a customer's risk profile and profitability". It can be barely more than five years ago that, when I wanted to borrow from Lloyds, I visited a chap called the bank manager — or he visited me: he was only ten minutes' walk away, and he liked to see what his customers were up to. I said what I wanted; he asked if I was sure

that was enough. Then he proposed a high interest rate: I offered a low one; we settled in the middle. Then I suggested he lower my charges, which he occasionally did. We got on well and he made money out of me. All based entirely on his judgment of my profitability and risk. Why doesn't Mr Ellwood just turn the clock back a very few years? Yours faithfully,
NEVILLE GAMBIER,
Gabbons Nursery,
Round Ring,
Penryn,
Cornwall TR10 9LA.

Letters to the Business section may be sent by fax to 0171 782 5112 or by e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk.

Liffe lines

THERE are some cruel and malicious people out there, and at least one works pretty high up at Liffe, it seems. A memo reaches me, on genuine headed paper, claiming to be from "Jürgen Hodson, Der Chiefexcofführer", which I take to be a joke at Daniel Hodson, Liffe's ambitious chief executive, and addressed to "anybody still prepared to believe us". And it purports to be the notes from the board's latest brainstorming session on February 9. There follows lots of rude things about the Germans I will spare you as we bask in the afterglow of



Daniel Hodson has become the subject of a spoof memo

Herr Kohl's visit to the City. There is plenty about the amount of trade being lost to Frankfurt. There is some stuff about the board that would be of interest to libel lawyers. There is an entry on the £40 million spending written off after the decision to defer moving certain contracts to the Stock Exchange trading floor, and on the Liffe contingency fund, outside estimates of which are well short of the mark, it says, and which is now sitting at £150 million. And so on.

Except that the note, although a work of fiction, is clearly more than the work of an aggrieved trader. There was indeed a board meeting on February 9, to discuss strategy at an unnamed out-station, but it was not publicised. The amount written off for the deferred move to the Stock Exchange is not £40 million, but £20 million — and rising. There is, as it happens, an (unquantified) contingency fund. I ring Liffe, who these days never sound too happy to hear from me. "There isn't a lot we can do, is there?" they say plaintively.

I HEAR a heartening story about ING Barings. Last week



the Dutch-owned bank took a hatchet to its emerging markets equity trading operations, and 200 jobs went, including 105 on the Latin American side. Now my mole within the bank says that the Dutch, perhaps rather inexperienced at swinging the axe, may have swung it too hard. The bank is having to rehire 15 to 20 of the Latin American staff it sacked.

Kwik change
JUST one minor detail is marring the merger between Kwik Save and Somerfield. No one has any idea what to call the shops, so the Somerfield name is to continue for now. But a change must come, and so the



"It's Somerfield — they want to change their name again"

Modest losses at the close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Table of stock prices categorized by sector: ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, BANKS, BREWERIES, PUBS & REST, BUILDING MATERIALS, CHEMICALS, CONSTRUCTION, DISTRIBUTORS, ELECTRICITY, ELECTRONIC & ELECT, ENGINEERING, ENGINEERING, VEHICLES, FOOD MANUFACTURERS, HEALTHCARE, HOUSEHOLD GOODS & TEXT, INSURANCE, INVESTMENT TRUSTS, MEDIA, MINING, OIL & GAS, PHARMACEUTICALS, PRINTING & PAPER, PROPERTY, RETAILERS, GENERAL, RETAILERS, FOOD, SUPPORT SERVICES, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT, WATER, and OTHER FINANCIAL.

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Advertisement for First Direct bank. Text: 'you don't want bank charges so everyday banking is free for 24 hour banking call free 0800 24 24 24'. Includes logo for Member HSBC Group.

Table titled 'BRITISH FUNDS' with columns for fund names, prices, and other metrics. Includes sub-sections for SHORTS (under 5 years), LONGS (over 15 years), and UNDATED.

Table titled 'INDEX-LINKED' with columns for index-linked fund names, prices, and other metrics.

Handwritten text at the bottom of the page: 'حکومت الامارات'.

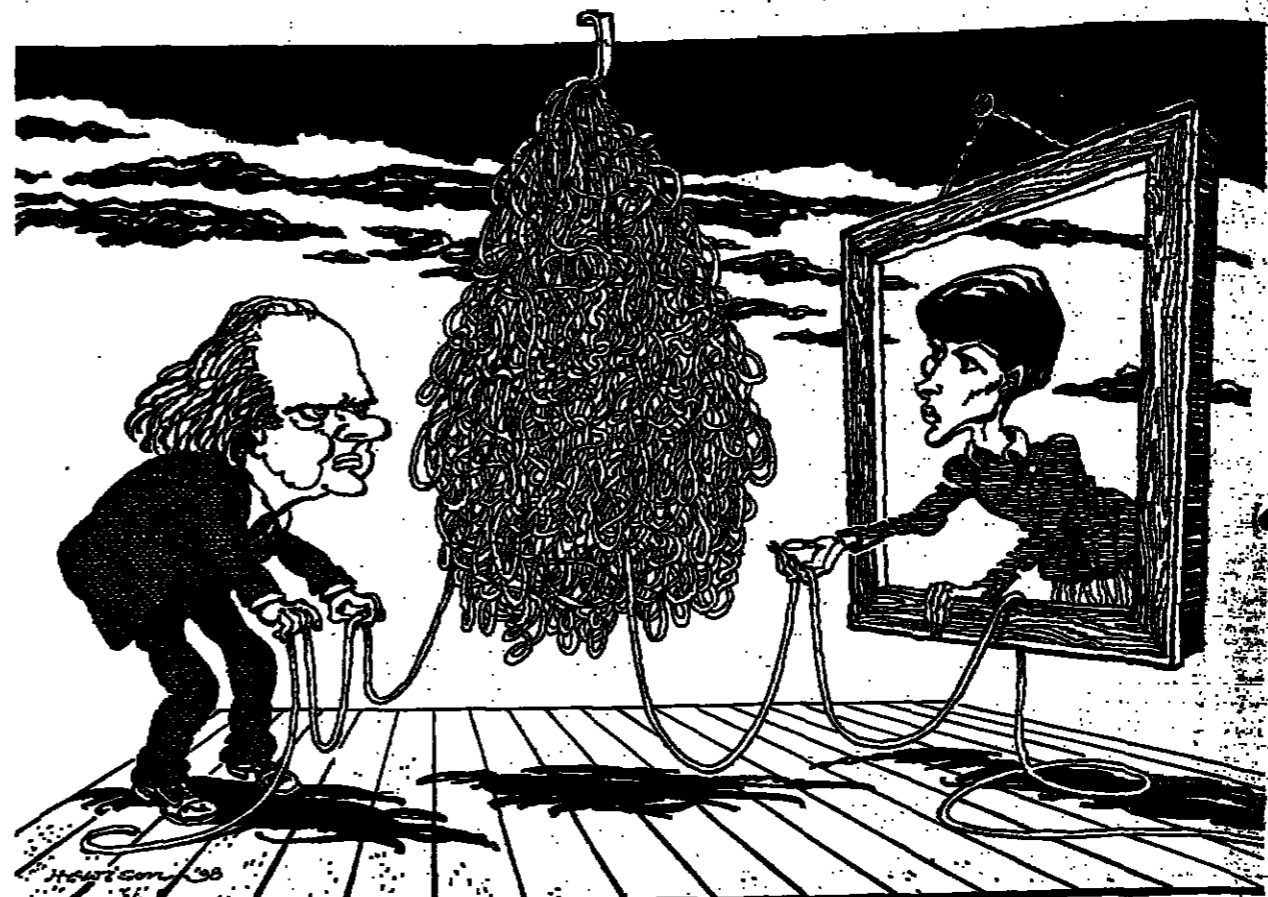
Handwritten note: 5000000000

Main table containing equity prices for various companies, organized in columns with headers like 'Company Name', 'Price', and 'Change'. Includes sub-sections for 'M & O Securities', 'Medical Specialties', 'Retail & Consumer Services', etc.

Advertisement for 'SEVEN SEAS' featuring a fisherman and the text 'Make an investment in your future. SEVEN SEAS... 1050mg... ONE-DAY... 40 CAPSULES'.

Source: FT Information. *Yield reported on CRR (Compound Annual Return). **Yield reported on MRR (Monthly Return). ***Yield reported on DRR (Daily Return). ****Yield reported on QRR (Quarterly Return). *****Yield reported on HRR (Half-Yearly Return). *****Yield reported on YRR (Yearly Return). *****Yield reported on YRR (Yearly Return).

Brave end of her tether



Untangling the mess: Oliver Ford Davies and Juliette Binoche in Jonathan Kent's adroit production of *Naked*

Juliette Binoche succeeded in bringing charisma and warmth to the task of nursing the char-grilled Ralph Finnes in *The English Patient*, but, though she won an Oscar for her efforts, that overrated movie did not tax her resources very profoundly. The extraordinary mixture of torrid drama and egghead inquiry that Pirandello called *Naked* presents a far more formidable challenge to mind, heart, glands, body and just about everything else an actress can use.

Naked Almeida

desolate young woman she plays to "sob, shiver, shake all over, and fall in a faint as her weeping rises to a shrill note that might be mistaken for laughter? Well, she omits the laughter, but delivers the rest and more.

Indeed, her torso writhes and her face seems to gash open as, hacking and wailing, she totters and twists to the floor. It is just one of many striking, end-of-the-world moments in one of the bravest performances I've seen.

She plays Ersilia Vreni, who is taking refuge with an ageing, mildly lecherous novelist after scandal has plastered her name all over the newspapers. She was employed as a nanny by the Italian consul in Smyrna. The child in her charge fell off the roof and was killed. She was fired. Her fiancé dropped her. She ended up penniless in a Roman park, preparing to prostitute herself but actually swallowing not quite enough poison for a successful suicide.

Those are the facts as they slowly and tantalisingly emerge in Jonathan Kent's adroit production — but are they the truth? Pirandello being the author, there is more subterfuge than certainty to be found amid the cracked red walls and heaps of old books of Paul Brown's excessively seedy set. With her excessively and her ex-lover (nearest Ben Daniels) joining Oliver Ford Davies' wonderfully sardonic, self-absorbed novelist, things get darker and more intricate,

especially as all the characters have ideas of Ersilia that are exposed as brittle, sentimental, melodramatic or, since her innocence is now lost, out of date.

In other words, *Naked* (supported, incidentally, by the Laura Pels Foundation) involves that very Pirandellian topic, the nature of identity in a world whose confusions are additionally signalled by the babble that rises from the street below. People ceaselessly judge others as they once were, or as they want them to be, not as they are. But despite his intellectual obsessions, Pirandello was one of the most viscerally emotional dramatists who ever bled on a public stage, and seldom more so than in this unjustifiably obscure play, perhaps never more than in his portrayal of Ersilia, a woman in the terminal stages of despair.

It is difficult to play someone whose search for an identity, or at least a persona, has left her convinced she is "nothing", "nobody", "naked". But that knowledge haunts a performance so bold you overlook the odd un-English emphasis. Fine-featured though she is, Binoche looks like some cornered rodent.

She squirms in self-defence, pulls at her ugly green dress as if to hide, winces from touch as

switches their prey. Another explosion and they hoarse screech of baffled rage as she resists the men who want to define or exploit her. She left me feeling I had seen a woman bare her nerves, her innards, maybe her soul.

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LONDON

CITY CLASSICS: Sit going strong after four decades on the jazz circuit the distinguished trumpeter Kenny Wheeler is joined for a gig here tomorrow (7.30pm) by guitarist Bill Fisel, saxophonist Leo Konte and bassist Dave Holland — the lineup from the acclaimed 1997 album *Angel Song* in the evening's first half. Fisel appears with saxophonist Joe Lovano and the anonymous drummer as part of the Paul Motian Trio. On Sunday (7.30pm) The London Symphony Orchestra under Mstislav Rostropovich continues its survey of Shostakovich's symphonies, with a performance of Symphony No. 3, preceded by the suite from the film score *Now Babylon* and the ballet *The Golden Age*. Barberian EC2 (0171-438 8891).

I AM YOURS: British premiere for Canadian Judith Thompson's play about two sisters, Lydia Barton, Genevieve (Sorenville) troubled by the past and the arrival of a strange young man. Nancy Maclean directs for Strand Repertory. Royal Court (Upstairs) (Ambassadors), West St. WC2 (0171-566 5000). Play runs from tonight, 7.45pm, to Sat. Feb 26. Then Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, mat Sat. 2pm (from Feb 28). 4pm. Until March 21.

SOUTH BANK EVENTS: A packed programme has been devised for a week of musical genres. At 7.30pm tonight the Festival Hall reopens to the rhythms of the Brazilian composer and musician Egberto Gismonti, who reflects the influence of Jimi Hendrix on the State of the Nation, the collective title of a series of events tomorrow. Conductor Markus Stenz and the London Sinfonietta explore arrangements within new British music, concluding with a concert in the Queen Elizabeth Hall at 7.45pm, which includes four world premieres. Back in the Festival Hall on Sunday (7.30pm) the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Gennadi

WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Martin Hargie

Rochester performs music by Kurt Weill, Egge and Schubert. South Bank, SE1 (0171-590 4242).

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: The Richard Alston Dance Company arrives with a new solo, *Triple X*, created specially by Alston for his company's new dancer, Jason Piper. Set to music by Purcell, the work marks the 30th anniversary of Alston's first choreography, *Transit*. Hippodrome, Hurst Street (0121-622 7458). Tomorrow, 7.45pm.

Kenny Wheeler blows his trumpet in the Barbican

LONDON GALLERIES

Barbican: *Shaker*. The Art of Craftsmanship (0171-438 8891).
Hayward: Francis Bacon: The Human Body (0171-438 3144).
Recovering Van Gogh (0171-741 2995).
National Portrait Gallery: Edwardian Photographs (0171-306 0055).
Royal Academy: Art Treasures of England (0171-300 8000).
Saatchi: Alex Katz (0171-624 8259).
Tate: Pierre Bonnard (0171-887 8007).
V & A: Colours of the India (0171-338 4848/4411).
Whitechapel: Thomas Schiøtz (0171-522 7888).

Barbican, Silk Street, EC2 (0171-638 8891). Tonight and tomorrow, 7.15pm; mat tomorrow, 2pm. In repertoire: *20th Century*. In repertoire: *20th Century*.

A LETTER OF RESIGNATION: Edward Fox and Clare Higgins play Harold Macmillan and Lady Dorothy in Hugh Whitemore's play about the effects of the Suez Canal. Christopher Morahan directs. Comedy Theatre, Portico Street, SW1 (0171-389 1711). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mat: Wed, 3pm and Sat, 4pm.

NAKED: Juliette Binoche (no less) plays the woman in whose care a child has died, and whose story emerges when she finds refuge with a middle-aged novelist (Oliver Ford Davies). Jonathan Kent directs. Pirandello's 1929 play of exile and death. Almeida Theatre, 116 Almeida Street, N1 (0171-359 4404). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat. 3pm. Until March 28.

LONG RUNNERS

Blood Brothers: Phoenix (0171-399 1733).
Caesars: New London (0171-405 0072).
Words of William Shakespeare (Abridged): Colston (0171-399 1737).
An Inspector Calls: Lyttelton (0171-494 5095).
Jesus Christ Superstar: Lyttelton (0171-696 1807).
The Mounting Storm: St Martin's (0171-494 5029).
The Phantom of the Opera: Her Majesty's (0171-494 5129).
The Caine: Prince of Wales (0171-436 5887).
Blacklight Express: Apollo Victoria (0171-418 6054).

THE ICE STORM (16): Connecticut families in 1973 have sex on the brain. Social drama, directed by Artur and Kevin Kline and Stephen Wariner. Barbican (0171-638 8891).
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IN & OUT (12): Can Kevin Kline's English teacher possibly be gay? Appalling mainstream comedy, directed by Frank Oz. West End. Matt Dillon and Tom Selleck. ABCs: Barbican Street (0171-438 9772).
THE WOODLANDERS (PG): Unrequited love in Hardy's Wessex, with a powerful performance by Emily Wool as the woodland girl who makes a mistaken marriage. Phil Agland directs. Curzon Phoenix (0171-389 1721).
PAWS (PG): Adventures of a dog who talks with Emily Cornwell's voice. Reasonably bright family entertainment from Australia. Director, Carl Zwarg. Clapham Picture House (0171-494 5029).
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THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only
Some seats available
Seats at all prices

Invitation of a Lady: Neil Patrick Harris (0171-923 2252).
THE FRONT PAGE: Alan Armstrong and Griff Rhys Jones play hard-boiled editor and ace reporter leading a lively cast in Sam Mendes's production of the classic Ben Hecht/Charles MacArthur comedy set in the newspaper world. Donmar Warehouse, Earlham Street, WC2 (0171-389 1732). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat: Wed and Sat, 3pm. Until April 4.

THE BLOUSE: Peter Hall revisits the legend of Robba Lovel of Prague, who created a room from clay with fearful consequences. The birth of the modern wardrobe. Produced by Polyglot Theatre Co in association with Jewish Centre. Lyttelton (0171-494 5029).

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HAMILT: Alex Jennings plays the Prince in Matthew Warchus's production of the parody of *Hamlet* with Deshaun Carter. Lyttelton (0171-494 5029).

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated) on release across the country

THE BOYER (15): Worried but devoid of love and longing in doublet Boland, with Daniel Day-Lewis and Emily Watson. Director, Jim Sheridan. Empire (0171-438 8891).

THE BUTCHER BOY (15): Scary account of Patrick McCabe's novel about a boy in a small town. Directed by Neil Jordan, with Eamonn Owens and Stephen Rea. Clapham Picture House (0171-494 5029).

THE END OF YUGOSLAVIA (15): Wim Wenders' bawled meditation on violence, the media and LA, with Ante Pletina, Grotto Byrne and Ande M. Shaw. Shaftesbury Ave (0171-638 8891).

FAIRYTALES: A TRUE STORY (U): A beautiful, brightly photographed, and lovely. Muddled drama inspired by a fairy tale, good effects, though with Paul McGann, Phoebe Nickolls, Peter O'Toole, Harvey Keitel. Odeon: Kensington (0181-315 4214).
MARBLE ARCH (16): A 1945 thriller. Clapham Picture House (0171-494 5029).
WHILE YOU WAIT (15): Warner (0171-437 4343).

PRISONER OF THE MOUNTAINS (15): Powerful humanistic drama about two Russian soldiers held hostage in a Chechen mountain village. Director, Serge Bodrov. Curzon Mayfair (0171-389 1720).

RUSSKAYA VOLNA (PG): A story of love and war, narrated by a lively cast of actors as its creator in Stalinsk. Director, Evgeny Ginzburg. Barbican (0171-638 8891).

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ART GALLERIES

PARKIN GALLERY 16 March in the Shadow of the Butterfly Whaler & Walter Greaves 11 Malcolm St SW1. Mon-Fri 10am to 5.30pm.

SERGEI CHEPIK THE EARLY WORKS NOW ON VIEW ALSO NOW ON VIEW SATTEL VEDERNIKOV AND BURAK ROY MILES GALLERY 29 BRITTON STREET W7 0UW. Tues-Fri 11am-5pm.

COLISEUM 0171 622 8000 (049) ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA. Tom 7.30. THE TEMPER OF LOVE.

ROYAL ALBERT HALL 80 0171 589 8212. Puccini's tragic masterpiece. MADAM BUTTERFLY. Sings in English. Spectacularly staged in the round. February 19th - March 1st. Nightly (Fri-Sat) at 7.30. Sat 8pm - Sun 1pm at 2.30. Tickets: all prices from £10.00. Tickets on 0171 589 4030. Tom, Tue, Thu 8.30. GUILDO CRESCENDO. The most superbly beautiful musical I've heard all year! D Tel and at the Royal Festival Hall. Box Office 0171 589 4242. Mon 7.30 (Fri 9pm). ANDREA CHEKURI in concert.

DANCE

Seather's Walls at the Peacock Theatre (0171) 344 6030. A futuristic take on E. Schostakovich's *Flamencas* has been chosen to be the first of a new series of dance works to be performed at the Peacock Theatre on Sunday 8 March.

THEATRES

ADELPHI 40 24hrs (U) 0171 484 5070. "A show to die for" Telegraph. Dipping with style. Express. OLIVER AWARD. NOMINATIONS INCLUDING OUTSTANDING PRODUCTION.

CHICAGO THE MUSICAL RUTHIE HENSHALL. UTE LEEMER. BERRY GOODMAN. NIGEL PLAMER. Mon-Sat 7.30pm & Sat 12.30pm. NOW BOOKING TO 30 JAN 1998.

ALBERT 389 1733/34 4444 "You'll be wanting an ab" DJM. STEPPING OUT THE MUSICAL. Tapping a rich vein of wit. Times 7.30. THE FULL MOON WITH SUPERS-GLITTERING DJM. LAST WONDERS. 1st half. Tues-Eves 8pm. Mat 3pm. Sat 4pm. LAST 2 WEEKS.

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CRITERION 389 1737/34 4444 THE REDUCED SHAKESPEARE COMPANY. THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (abridged) At 37 Plays in 57 segments. "Billboard" Times. "Go Now" Sunday Times. At 4.15, 6.15, 8.15, 10.15. Sun at 4.15, 6.15, 8.15, 10.15. Now Booking and Subscribes '98.

DOORWAY 0171 656 1885/0171 344 4444 "The most brilliant and exciting play for years" D Mail. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. Sun 4.15pm. Fantasy Name 2179.

GARRICK 0171 484 5070 12 1909. 4th 5.30pm. 6.15pm. 8.15pm. Groups 0171 494 5454. Winner of 19 Major Awards. The Royal National Theatre. Production. PIP MILLER. ALISON BERRY. JOHN BARON. 8.15pm. 10.15pm.

AN INSPECTOR CALLS "Thrilling...like an event" D Mail. "Two hours of extraordinary, visually stunning theatre" D Mail. Mon-Fri 7.45, Sat 5.00 & 8.15. Mat: Wed 2.30.

GIELGUD 0171 494 5068 cc 0171 420 0000 (big big) Gps 494 5454. JANE ASHER.

STEVEN PACEY THINGS WE DO FOR LOVE. A new comedy written & directed by ALAN AYCKBOM. Red Free Press from 26 Feb. Opens 3 March 7pm. Mon-Sat 7.45pm. Mat: Thu & Sat 3pm.

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AN IDEAL HUSBAND "GREAT AND GLORIOUS" Times. Hesperia 0171 728 1901. Sat 8. Sat 3.30 & 8. George F. Walker's. FEATURING LORRETTA.

DUCHESNE 0171 494 5070 cc 0171 420 0000 (big big) Gps 494 5454. MICHAEL WILLIAMS. BRIEF LIVES. Adapted & directed by Patrick Garland. PERFS FROM 18 MARCH.

FORTUNE BO & CC 0171 636 2232/2 8834/4 308 NOW IN ITS 5th YEAR. DAVID ROBERT. DEMIGER. PULLAN. Susan Hill's. THE WOMAN IN BLACK. Adapted by Stephen Mulrow. "The most brilliant and exciting play for years" D Mail. Mon-Fri 7.30pm. Sat 3.30pm. Sun 4.15pm. Fantasy Name 2179.

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LYRIC 0171 494 5045 (+ 1st) cc 0171 420 0000 (big big) Gps 494 5454. LAURENCE OLIVIER AWARDS. BEST WEST END PLAY. THE OUTLAND. BEST COMEDY. Evening Standard Award. BEST PLAY. Clifton Centre Award.

CLOSER BY PATRICK MARBER. Prev 1997. 2000. 2001. 2002. 2003. 2004. 2005. 2006. 2007. 2008. 2009. 2010. 2011. 2012. 2013. 2014. 2015. 2016. 2017. 2018. 2019. 2020. 2021. 2022. 2023. 2024. 2025. 2026. 2027. 2028. 2029. 2030. 2031. 2032. 2033. 2034. 2035. 2036. 2037. 2038. 2039. 2040. 2041. 2042. 2043. 2044. 2045. 2046. 2047. 2048. 2049. 2050. 2051. 2052. 2053. 2054. 2055. 2056. 2057. 2058. 2059. 2060. 2061. 2062. 2063. 2064. 2065. 2066. 2067. 2068. 2069. 2070. 2071. 2072. 2073. 2074. 2075. 2076. 2077. 2078. 2079. 2080. 2081. 2082. 2083. 2084. 2085. 2086. 2087. 2088. 2089. 2090. 2091. 2092. 2093. 2094. 2095. 2096. 2097. 2098. 2099. 2100. 2101. 2102. 2103. 2104. 2105. 2106. 2107. 2108. 2109. 2110. 2111. 2112. 2113. 2114. 2115. 2116. 2117. 2118. 2119. 2120. 2121. 2122. 2123. 2124. 2125. 2126. 2127. 2128. 2129. 2130. 2131. 2132. 2133. 2134. 2135. 2136. 2137. 2138. 2139. 2140. 2141. 2142. 2143. 2144. 2145. 2146. 2147. 2148. 2149. 2150. 2151. 2152. 2153. 2154. 2155. 2156. 2157. 2158. 2159. 2160. 2161. 2162. 2163. 2164. 2165. 2166. 2167. 2168. 2169. 2170. 2171. 2172. 2173. 2174. 2175. 2176. 2177. 2178. 2179. 2180. 2181. 2182. 2183. 2184. 2185. 2186. 2187. 2188. 2189. 2190. 2191. 2192. 2193. 2194. 2195. 2196. 2197. 2198. 2199. 2200. 2201. 2202. 2203. 2204. 2205. 2206. 2207. 2208. 2209. 2210. 2211. 2212. 2213. 2214. 2215. 2216. 2217. 2218. 2219. 2220. 2221. 2222. 2223. 2224. 2225. 2226. 2227. 2228. 2229. 2230. 2231. 2232. 2233. 2234. 2235. 2236. 2237. 2238. 2239. 2240. 2241. 2242. 2243. 2244. 2245. 2246. 2247. 2248. 2249. 2250. 2251. 2252. 2253. 2254. 2255. 2256. 2257. 2258. 2259. 2260. 2261. 2262. 2263. 2264. 2265. 2266. 2267. 2268. 2269. 2270. 2271. 2272. 2273. 2274. 2275. 2276. 2277. 2278. 2279. 2280. 2281. 2282. 2283. 2284. 2285. 2286. 2287. 2288. 2289. 2290. 2291. 2292. 2293. 2294. 2295. 2296. 2297. 2298. 2299. 2300. 2301. 2302. 2303. 2304. 2305. 2306. 2307. 2308. 2309. 2310. 2311. 2312. 2313. 2314. 2315. 2316. 2317. 2318. 2319. 2320. 2321. 2322. 2323. 2324. 2325. 2326. 2327. 2328. 2329. 2330. 2331. 2332. 2333. 2334. 2335. 2336. 2337. 2338. 2339. 2340. 2341. 2342. 2343. 2344. 2345. 2346. 2347. 2348. 2349. 2350. 2351. 2352. 2353. 2354. 2355. 2356. 2357. 2358. 2359. 2360. 2361. 2362. 2363. 2364. 2365. 2366. 2367. 2368. 2369. 2370. 2371. 2372. 2373. 2374. 2375. 2376. 2377. 2378. 2379. 2380. 2381. 2382. 2383. 2384. 2385. 2386. 2387. 2388. 2389. 2390. 2391. 2392. 2393. 2394. 2395. 2396. 2397. 2398. 2399. 2400. 2401. 2402. 2403. 2404. 2405. 2406. 2407. 2408. 2409. 2410. 2411. 2412. 2413. 2414. 2415. 2416. 2417. 2418. 2419. 2420. 2421. 2422. 2423. 2424. 2425. 2426. 2427. 2428. 2429. 2430. 2431. 2432. 2433. 2434. 2435. 2436. 2437. 2438. 2439. 2440. 2441. 2442. 2443. 2444. 2445. 2446. 2447. 2448. 2449. 2450. 2451. 2452. 2453. 2454. 2455. 2456. 2457. 2458. 2459. 2460. 2461. 2462. 2463. 2464. 2465. 2466. 2467. 2468. 2469. 2470. 2471. 2472. 2473. 2474. 2475. 2476. 2477. 2478. 2479. 2480. 2481. 2482. 2483. 2484. 2485. 2486. 2487. 2488. 2489. 2490. 2491. 2492. 2493. 2494. 2495. 2496. 2497. 24

Dream ticket to operatic heaven

Not often does this column play the role of spoilsport in that ever-popular national pastime. Kick the Royal Opera House. But at some stage in this amusing game the people who really care about musical life in Britain start to resent the endless sniping at this easy target by MPs who are themselves mostly abject under-achievers. Yes, Covent Garden has made horrible mistakes. Yes, heads had to roll, and I dare say that the gullotine still has work to do.

But let's get this thing in proportion. If the proper scrutiny of public expenditure is the issue here, why is Gerald Kaufmann's select committee ranting about a few million quid lost at Covent Garden, while hopelessly nebulous plans to fritter £750 million on the Greenwich-Dome are nodded through, entirely on trust? How much has been wasted already on "consultancy fees" for the dozens of "design gurus" who clock in and out of that gargantuan fiasco? I don't really want to know, my

blood pressure is too high already. My point is this: what happened at Covent Garden last year is history. It stank, but it's over. Now the only question that matters is: where do we go from here? How do we build an exciting, sustainable operatic life in our capital?

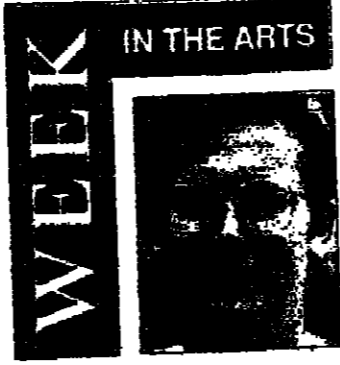
In theory, Richard Eyre's committee is tackling that matter. I don't doubt the intelligence, integrity or experience of the former National Theatre boss. But when you survey the gruesomely uninspired choice of personnel for his committee — stacked with Arts Council bureaucrats and opera people with a huge interest in maintaining the status quo — you have to doubt whether radical thinking will feature in his report.

So let's think radical on its behalf. Last year this column advocated pouring subsidy into one London opera house, rather

than spreading it inadequately across two. English National Opera took fright at this notion, fearing a "merger" that would kill off its brand of relatively cheap, adventurous opera.

But if I ruled the world the opposite would be the case. It would be the accessible ENO that got subsidy, leaving the Royal Opera House to probe the deeper recesses of its patrons' wallets. That may still happen, though the Government would probably need to introduce American-style tax breaks to release the level of private patronage necessary to bankroll a privatised Covent Garden.

This talk of money, however, is putting cart before horse. First we must think through why opera houses exist at all. In short, do they each have a compelling artistic vision? The short answer for



RICHARD MORRISON

Covent Garden is no. The wrong people are in charge. A great opera company is not created by its chairman, fundraisers, administrators or accountants. They should be the supporting cast, not

the prima donnas. It is driven by a charismatic figure, usually a conductor, with a compelling vision of what should happen on the stage. Think of Gergiev at the Kirov, Levine at the Met, Muti at La Scala or, 30 years ago, Solti at Covent Garden.

Today, Covent Garden fatally lacks such a figure. Bernard Haitink is a conductor of genius, but semi-detached from internal decision-making. So the paramount task for Colin Southgate, Covent Garden's new chairman, must be to find such a figure. The obvious choice is Simon Rattle.

Then Southgate needs to sort out the bizarre chain of command inside the House. To have a chief executive who is not also in charge of the opera company is daft. You need a single administrative supreme — but it must be someone who knows every dodge in the

operatic book. Is Mary Allen, the present chief executive, that person? In her dreams, perhaps. My first choice for this job would be Brian McMaster, the Edinburgh Festival boss. Remember how he steered Welsh National Opera to glory in the 1980s?

Of course, there is little incentive for either Rattle or McMaster to come to such a house of ill-repute as Covent Garden. Rattle, in particular, could easily be tempted abroad. Only last week Claudio Abbado announced that he was leaving the Berlin Philharmonic. This week, by chance, Rattle conducts that magnificent orchestra. I would be amazed if, right now, the first steps in an elaborate courtship gavotte are not being danced during the rehearsal breaks.

To snatch him for Covent Garden, Southgate needs to talk fast and persuasively. He should not hesitate. There is no point in prattling on about how the new Covent Garden will offer "top-class international opera" if you are not prepared to woo Britain's one truly world-class conductor to bring it about.

So that's my dream ticket. With Rattle and McMaster on board for the 21st century, Covent Garden would breathe the fresh air of dynamic creativity again, instead of suffocating in a fug of snobbery and incompetence. Suddenly, it would radiate an aura of success instead of despair.

But how likely is my dream ticket? The one thing I know is that a recommendation from this column usually ensures that the operatic world embarks on the opposite direction. So, chaffing in the knowledge that I have probably guaranteed another 20 years of muddling mediocrity at Covent Garden, I fall silent on this vexing subject.

STEVE FORREST/GETTY IMAGES

Pastiche from a master

Allen Robertson meets the award-winning designer Lez Brotherston, on the eve of his latest world premiere

Lez Brotherston may have just scooped the Olivier Award for his work on *Adventures in Motion Pictures* West End production of *Cinderella*, but right now he is more concerned with *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, his latest creation for Northern Ballet Theatre. *Cinderella* was set during the London Blitz; *Hunchback* is set in medieval Paris, a Gothic tale of tights and tabards, jokes Brotherston.

"But designers always work in pastiche. They're not original; they always work in a period that's not their own."

Brotherston's design studio, an extension of his kitchen, is tucked in between the fish tank and the dog's toys. Crammed with art books, drawings and models it takes up much of the upper floor in his split-level flat. Still in the process of being "polished to perfection", the flat is in a huge converted Victorian school in the East End of London.

"When I'm working on a project it feels as if I'm here with the model, working it out, doing the drawings. It's here with me 24 hours a day and it's here for months and months. When it gets to rehearsals and it slowly starts being taken away from you and it becomes the dancers' property. All along, bit by bit, you're needed less and less until you come to the first night and if you didn't turn up it wouldn't make an ounce of difference."

For the past several seasons Brotherston's design time has been heavily focused on dance. Two of this decade's biggest box office successes — AMP's Broadway-bound *Swan Lake* and NBT's *Dracula* (finally due in London in 1999) — showcase his evocative sets

and costumes. Even so, he maintains that he is an outsider when it comes to the world of ballet. "I don't know the 42 different kinds of tutus you can do. Hah! I don't even know one. But I can always ask 'Why?', always say 'That doesn't make sense'."

With both AMP and NBT, Brotherston uses his theatrical savvy to help to clarify the final product in a way that is both logical and imaginative, as well as appealing to the widest possible audience. He has developed a knack for turning the minimum into the maximum, which allows dancers and choreographers to fill the stage with movement that flies off his lavish visual conception.

"NBT and AMP are coming from the same place," he says. "It's narrative, it's character based, it's acting based. It is not a negotiation of what went before. It's a development that is going off in a different way."

Look at *Dracula*. All of a sudden we had 27-year-olds, 34-year-olds, coming to the ballet. They weren't just young people who want to be dancers or people who sort of remember Margot Fonteyn and the classics the way they used to be.

"When Christopher Gable [artistic director since 1987] first got to NBT they were doing the cheapest, smallest, cut-down versions of a kind of classics. It was such a kind of ramshackle, low-priority kind of thing, but he has completely turned that around into a viable company that does works on its own terms, its own merits, and it has paid off enormously."

"After all," he continues, "something had to happen in ballet, it really did. If you're not encouraging people to have a look at new works it

will just suffocate. It will implode; it will get smaller and smaller until it just disappears. You can't keep churning out the same ten ballets again and again."

The Hunchback of Notre Dame — choreographed by Michael Pink with a new score by Philip Feeney, is a project originally generated by Gable more than two years ago. "There I was," Brotherston says, "designing *Cinderella* for AMP, *Hunchback* for NBT and working on the now-postponed *Aladdin* for Scottish Ballet. It was like I was doing the Disney collection."

"I don't think that's to be ignored. Marketing really controls what happens these days. The marketing people with all their surveys know that a ballet has got to be something the audience has heard of. You can do what you want with it, but the title has to be something they think they know."

"When it comes to *Hunchback* I've found no one's ever actually read the book, but everyone thinks they know the story. The version we've come up with stays as true to the original as it possibly can in dance terms. But every time there's ever been a new version of something, people take what's relevant or necessary for them and leave the other bits aside. That's what Matthew Bourne does with AMP and it's what Christopher Gable does with NBT."

"Without Christopher, the encouragement and time he spent with me, I wouldn't have gone on to do the AMP shows, so I probably wouldn't have ended up winning an Olivier."

● *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* opens at the Grand Theatre, Leeds (0113-222 6222) on Monday night



"I don't know the 42 different kinds of tutus, I don't even know one": Lez Brotherston on his set for *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, which opens in Leeds on Monday

Package drawn tight with strings

In the latter stages of the work the broad swelling melody was projected by the orchestra in such a way as to put one in mind of the great Mississippi.

Dominick Argento, the orchestra's composer laureate, works in a tonal idiom as listener-friendly as that of Barber. He shares that open-air, inspirational quality of Barber, Copland and others of his compatriots, and his *Reflections on a Hymn Tune*, composed specially for this tour, was given an aptly inspirational performance. To the big-boned, Barber-like string writing were

viola, catching the mood of *joie de vivre* but finding room too for intimate reflection. The Andante in particular found them leaning towards each other in a close rapport that was continued in their encore, for which Oue sat modestly and appreciatively on the side of the rstrum.

That old favourite of touring ensembles, Bartok's *Concerto for Orchestra*, provided a suitable showpiece finale. If one or two passages of antiphonal counterpoint might have been given just a little more edge, there was no arguing with those strings as they returned to the attack, and the mental image of the Mississippi in full flood returned as the key-changing semiquavers of the finale swept unstopably by.

BARRY MILLINGTON

CONCERT
Minnesota Orch
Barbican

A sure touch to thrill

MAY not be flouted as a high-profile "international" or "celebrity" season, but the Wigmore Hall's London Pianoforte Series actually contains the pianists one really wants to hear. Here are the players who live by each present performance, not on past reputation; here are the pianists whose musicianship is frequently kept alive through chamber-music making, not eroded by touring marathons.

And here, on Tuesday, was Leif Ove Andsnes. The 27-year-old Norwegian is enough of an international celebrity now, but he is neither erratic, weary, nor over-hyped. His intelligently structured programme began with Haydn and Beethoven and travelled, through Frank Martin, to Liszt. Haydn's Sonata in E flat (HXVI:49) was tinted and

made the more witty by Andsnes's immaculate sense of dramatic timing. But he also made us hear Haydn as Beethoven did: not only in that little motif reminiscent of "Fate knocking at the door", but in the breadth of thought he brought to the slow movement as it traversed the extremes of the keyboard.

Beethovenian audacity burst in with a sharp shock in the *Fantasia in G* minor. Its opening avalanche of scales, the sudden stillness; the violent, isolated chords — Andsnes held the work's improvisatory unpredictability and its sure sense of structure — in constantly exciting balance.



HILARY FINCH

Beethoven's *Les Adieux* Sonata, the shifting weight of shoulder, spine, arm and hand all played a most eloquent part in actually defining and then giving momentum to its developing material.

Frank Martin's *Fantasy on Flamenco Rhythms* was a typically maverick gesture — yet one which, in its rhythmic virtuosity and volatility, made a thrilling counterbalance to Beethoven's own fantasies. For Liszt, Andsnes turned to the *Dante Sonata*. This was a performance which — again in the sheer strength of its physical containment — captured the heart of the Romantic imagination, not just its grandiloquence.

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Choked by a jagged little pill

NEW POP ALBUMS: Now is the time for British record buyers to do right
by Lisa Loeb, says David Sinclair

LISA LOEB
Firecracker
(Geffen GED 24946 £13.99)
HAS EVER a pop career been subject to such bad timing as that of Lisa Loeb? She topped the American chart by accident in 1994 with the single *Stay (I Missed You)* before she had even signed a recording contract. By the time her debut album, *Tails*, was eventually recorded and released at the end of 1995, she was yesterday's news, eclipsed by the monumental success of Alanis Morissette's *Jagged Little Pill*.
Loeb's follow-up, *Firecracker*, was released in America last November, where it has gone off more like a damp squib, struggling to reach a peak of No 88 in the *Billboard* 200. Now *Firecracker* is belatedly put out in Britain as a manifestly low-priority item by a record company disinclined to invest much energy, let alone money, on its behalf. It deserves better.
For, although Loeb does not have such a strident tone as Morissette, or strike the radical poses of newer stars such as Ani DiFranco and Jewel, she has an expressive voice and a winning way with a tune. Her mainstream folk-rock touch works a treat on *I Do*, a disillusioned love song with a delightfully clipped descending chord sequence, but there is more depth to her music than that, as she demonstrates with the eerie orchestration on *Furious Rose* and the fast, jazzy rhythms of *Wishing Heart*.
As a lyricist she can be a bit on the artless side, spilling out emotions with careless, faux-dramatic candour and mixing metaphors with cavalier abandon on *Let's Forget About It*. "I'll stop crying on the mountain that we made from the molehill where we split the milk". But, given half a chance, her songs reveal a character and wit that are easily a match for those by far more fashionable acts.

where traditional guitar pop and art-school electronica meet.
"You've just got to move with the times," Louis Jones sings on the title track of *Future Signs*, his voice betraying the inevitable echoes of David Bowie, the riff an amalgam of early Roxy Music and T. Rex. But although there are some nice moments, especially the comparatively dark *Romero*, with its wrangy, off-kilter shots of *Twin Peaks* guitar, this is a band with no creative *raison d'être*. They want to be successful, and this album certainly sounds the part. But, despite the constant efforts of their record company, you get the feeling that nobody would be too bothered if they disappeared tomorrow.

WES
Welenga
(Epic SAN 485146 £15.99)
THE extraordinary success of *Alone* — a substantial hit single all over Europe — has propelled singer Wes Madiko to unlikely heights of fame. But intriguing though it is to hear a galloping dance number sung on *Top of the Pops* in Bafoua (a language spoken by the Bantou tribe in Cameroon), there is something irksome about the way in which a proud musical tradition and philosophy has been mashed and moulded into mass-marketable shape on the album *Welenga*, originally released in France two years ago.

Behind the soaring voice and expansive personality of Madiko lurks the shadowy figure of French producer and composer Michel Sanchez, best known for his work with the new age/world music duo Deep Forest. A man well-versed in the studio magician's art of combining "ethnic" music with everything from a techno beat to squealing, Van Halen-esque guitar solos, Sanchez has taken a cappella recordings of Madiko's voice — reminiscent at times of the Senegalese singer Youssou N'Dour — and set them in a variety of modern contexts.
The results range from the ingenious *Mawaza*, with its bizarre mixture of Middle Eastern and vaguely industrial drones, to the frankly ridiculous slow, blues-boogie treatment of *Mindoulo*.

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Viva Americana
(boka/Direct Distribution 001 £13.99)
"LIKE a James Dean movie that won't fade away/Like an old freight train in the night ... They call it Americana."



Lisa Loeb, living proof that timing is everything in pop music, deserves a better fate than has so far befallen her fine album, *Firecracker*.

sings Chip Taylor on the title, and indeed defining, track of *Viva Americana*, an album which brings together "rare, exclusive and live" performances by artists including Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Dale Watson, Terry Allen, Jason &

the Scorchers and Gretchen Peters.
What binds these various country, folk and roots-rock acts together is a maverick and essentially old-fashioned approach to making music which has barred them from

the recognised American radio formats, thus necessitating the invention of a format of their own — Americana.
With few exceptions, notably Gilmore's inspired version of Blind Lemon Jefferson's *Black Snake Moan*, these are

not the best songs you will hear them play. But the 48 pages of essays, sleeve notes and interviews which accompany the disc provide a wealth of anecdote and information that is sure to stimulate further investigation.

MARK ISHAM
Afterglow — Music from the Motion Picture
(Columbia CK 67929)
MANY of trumpeter and composer Mark Isham's soundtrack recordings have veered uncomfortably close to atmospheric but lightweight jazz fusion, but this album consolidates the jazz credentials he earned with his previous, lush, heavily Miles Davis-influenced CD, *Blue Sun*.
Afterglow sets Isham's burnished, ringing trumpet, or his affectingly melancholy muted sound, against a wholly acoustic backdrop comprised of Gary Burton's glowing vibes, Geri Allen's lyrical piano and a superb rhythm section: bassist Jeff Littleton and drummer Billy Higgins. Tenor player Charles Lloyd ornaments many selections with his uniquely rhapsodic, brooding sound, but whoever is taking the main solo duties — Isham, Allen, Burton or Violinist Sid Page — the music remains consistently lush and romantically

Sonny dawn

SONNY ROLLINS
The Blue Note Recordings
(Capitol Jazz 8213712)
THE brief period the great tenor player Sonny Rollins spent with Blue Note — coming at the end of his 1953-57 stint with the Max Roach/Clifford Brown quintet and before his short sabbatical at the close of the 1950s — is characterised by many of the musical traits for which he is justly celebrated in the 1990s: gruff, muscular fluency, an apparently inexhaustible improvisatory imagination and a penchant for extracting unexpected delights from unlikely material.
These CDs, however, also highlight an aspect of his art not so readily apparent these days: his ability to interact with musical equals, here

NEW JAZZ ALBUMS
represented by the likes of drummers Max Roach and Art Blakey, trombonist J.J. Johnson, pianists Horace Silver and Thelonious Monk and trumpeter Donald Byrd.
Comprising three studio albums and both volumes of the live Village Vanguard trio sessions, this mid-price, five-CD set is an essential purchase.

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CHRIS PARKER

WARM JETS

Future Signs
(This Way Up/Island 524 354 £13.99)
YOU CAN spot a group like Warm Jets coming a mile off. Clever, energetic and persistent, they are staffed by spiky types in their late twenties who used to play in also-ran bands such as Eat and TV Eye. Steeped in 1970s mannerisms, they make music which is a triumph of ambition over imagination, carefully tweaking their sound to fit some imagined post-Britpop niche

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- 1 (1) Urban Hymns.....Verve (Huf)
- 2 (2) Titanic Soundtrack.....James Horner (Sony Classical)
- 3 (4) All Saints.....All Saints (London)
- 4 (3) Life Thru a Lens.....Robbie Williams (Chrysalis)
- 5 (6) Truly.....Lionel Richie (Motown/Polygram TV)
- 6 (5) Postcards from Heaven Lighthouse Family (Wild Card)
- 7 (7) Let's Talk About Love.....Celine Dion (Epic)
- 8 (12) Mawrick a Strike.....Finley Quaye (Epic)
- 9 (10) White on Blonde.....Tazas (Mercury)
- 10 (8) Aquarium.....Acqua (Universal)

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CHANGING TIMES

In his song *Days Like This*, Van Morrison joyously described one of those rare occasions "when there's no one complaining" and everything is bathed in the warm glow of perfect contentment. Sometimes you get nights like that, too, and we were lucky enough to share one with Van the Man in Brighton.

Possibly it was the sea air (we were on the South coast because Morrison has apparently declared that he will not play cynical old London any more), or maybe he was still on a high from a brace of reportedly stunning shows with Bob Dylan in New York last month. Or perhaps it is that at 52 he is simply feeling more at ease with the world.

Whatever the reason, this was Morrison at his most relaxed, joking with the audience and exuding bonhomie. No prickliness and no tantrums, just two hours of sublime and mature music drawing on the entire lexicon of soul, jazz and blues, reflecting a career spanning four decades in which the quality control has never lapsed.

After a brief warm-up from Brian Kennedy, who has taken on his role as chief cheerleader with gusto, Morrison opened with a 20-minute burst of *Burning Ground*, *Fire in the Belly* and *In the Afternoon* without even pausing to sa-

Quite an astral night

LIVE GIG
Van Morrison
Brighton Dome

your the applause. It was tight and professional, but virtually identical to the set he had toured with last year.

There the similarities ended, however. The first surprise was when he brought on Lonnie Donegan for a skiffle interlude. They were under-rehearsed (Morrison strapped on Donegan's guitar by mistake and then the two publicly debated what key they should be in) but this added to the charm as they ran through a series of delightful duets on traditional songs such as *Alabama Bound* and *Muleskinner Blues*. They could produce a superb album together.

There was a further surprise when Morrison, still strumming an acoustic, immediately followed with a passionate unplugged rendition of *Balle-*

rina, from his seminal 1968 album, *Astral Weeks*. Then it was back to R&B mode for a storming *Moondance*, in which every member of the seven-piece band took a solo, jazz style.

Although Morrison has lost George Fame on organ, the nucleus of his band has now been stable for several years. It shows in their almost intuitive playing and at least two of his sidemen are full-blown stars in their own right. The horn player, PeeWee Ellis, shone throughout and was positively awesome on *It's A Man's Man's World*, a dynamic tribute to the great James Brown, in whose band Ellis once played.

Kennedy, too, has become a masterful performer. Morrison's own voice improves with age, all resonant power and assured phrasing, but the younger man's elastic vocal chords provided the perfect foil as his high tenor echoed his boss's lines in thrilling fashion.

They wove their voices caressingly around each other on *Tupelo Honey* and *Crazy Love*, and ended with a climactic version of *Healing Games* that left us totally satiated. On nights like this you won't find anyone complaining.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

Same old song

POP THEATRE

NOW that every art form under the sun has declared itself to be the new rock'n'roll, rock bands themselves are wanting something different. Mick Jagger is bob-nobbing with royalty, Noel Gallagher is sipping champers at No 10 and Paul McCartney is composing symphonies. But what about the ones who aren't prepared to play the game, the rebels who still believe they are somehow above the marketing machine?

Ronan O'Donnell's debut play (at the Traverse) takes its name from a latter-day fab three dragged off by sleazy manager Ed to get their heads together in the country. In the decadent splendour of a rundown Highland mansion, Riki, Banji and Wendy shamble around in search of a way back to more innocent days. While Gabriel Quigley's Wendy gets back to nature, Riki's a downfall child off on a one-way trip to where even a disappearing act is good press. Ed, meanwhile, attempts to turn Riki's impending personal implosion to his advantage. John Kazek's Ed is the star here, played not so much as a Machiavellian maestro as a smalltime operator as desperate for fame as his charges.

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سكننا من الاصل

Affirmative in action

Punk thought it had killed off the pomp-rock likes of Yes. Think again



Jon Anderson (third from left) and the latest, generation-spanning incarnation of Yes

Chumbawamba have at least two things in common with 1970s pomp-rockers Yes. For a start, Jon Anderson, Yes's choirboy-voiced (still, at 53) lead singer, can detect echoes on the Chumbas' *Tubthumping* of his own group's chanting on such classics as 1971's *Fragile*. For another, Yes also get knocked down — and get up again.

They've been doing it for the past 20 years, ever since punk slouched on to the scene and gobbed over the likes of Yes, Genesis, Jethro Tull and all the other rock dinosaurs whose main failure was to be in full command of their instruments. OK, there were other conceits such as elaborate light shows and concept double albums with only five songs on them, but the main charge seemed to be that people such as Yes's Rick Wakeman had gone to college to learn about playing his instrument. And that was what old people did.

And guess what? The same charge is still being hurled at Anderson, Chris Squire, Steve Howe and Alan White, the veteran nucleus of Yes on their umpteenth world tour. "I was being interviewed in Munich," Anderson says, his accent an amalgam of the Acrcrington of his birthplace and the California that has been his home for years, "and the reporter said that her boyfriend said Yes had been going for too long and wondered when they were going to quit." The answer is never.

Before the long sojourn in uncool limbo, Yes had been strutting rock gods. The likes of *The Yes Album*, *Fragile* and *Close to the Edge* had won them millions of fans — mainly young men who took rock music very seriously — drawn to them by the intricacy of their arrangements, the precision of their playing, even the nonsense lyrics that Anderson sang in a way that made them musically relevant.

And Yes were loved, possibly as no band had been since the Beatles. They were voted into top place in poll after poll

in the early years of the 1970s — Best Band, Best Album, Best Guitarist, Best Bass Player, George Best...

And then nothing. Sure there were the occasional big-selling Yes albums, and even a No 1 single, *Owner of a Lonely Heart*, but the name became one to be sniggered at, rather than met with an awed intake of breath. "But what can we do?" Anderson says. "Yes have a style, and we have to stick to our guns."

There have been certain compromises. On the new album, *Open Your Eyes*, all but one of the songs weigh in at a speedy four to six minutes, a far cry from the vast and unwieldy one-song-per-side that was *Tales From The Topographic Oceans*, back in 1973. Many a Yes devotee, and I was one of them, choked on the rich pudding that was *Tales*. This was rock Mahler, and we didn't want any sort of Mahler, thank you.

Anderson doesn't agree. "In the new show we do the first part of *Tales*," he says, "and I'm struck by how beautiful it is." And, of course, shorter. But hey, this is no place to snipe. If a fan who actually spent £5 on a bootleg cassette

recorded 40 rows back at a Yes gig can't indulge in a little unabashed hero worship towards them, then the world is a mean and dark place.

The love is still there — happily, shared by a new generation of Yes fans. "Before I left California I got a letter from a 12-year-old girl saying that she'd heard one of the albums I did with Vangelis [very rich as a result of writing the theme to *Charlies of Fire*] and she was going to buy Yes's *90125*." Just wait until she has her little cotton socks knocked off by Yessongs, one of the greatest live albums ever, and definitely the greatest triple live album.

Many of the songs on Yessongs pop up in Yes's concerts today, as they should. You don't get much better than the likes of *Starship Trooper*, *And You and I* and *Long Distance Runaround*, songs with big themes and vast ambitions, directed by Howe's virtuoso guitar, Squire's room-shaking bass and White's tricky drumming.

Wakeman should have been with them, but the old sparkling-capped showman bombed out at the last minute, to be replaced by a Russian keyboard player named Igor Khorachev. He can, Anderson says, "play anything. He loves Rachmaninov, Keith Jarrett. And we make him wear the spangled cape." Every time Anderson and his beloved group — "All ever wanted was to be in a band like Yes" — go on tour they sell a million albums. They don't tend to get very high in the charts in each particular country they visit in a touring schedule that lasts 18 months at a time and takes in all the continents, but add all those sales together and they are still the Yes that likes to stay bankable.

In the end, it is a massive irony that Yes are so vilified by everyone but the diehards. Scratch the "serious music" image of Radiohead, or the widescreen pretensions of fashionable bands such as the Verve and Spiritualized, and there is more than a glint of the pure platinum that is Yes. But just by telling that to the artists of cool.

CHRIS CAMPLING

● The album *Open Your Eyes* is released by Eagle Records. Yes play Manchester Apollo next Thursday, then Newcastle City Hall (Feb 27), Clyde Auditorium (Feb 28), Nottingham Royal Concert Hall (Mar 1), Bournemouth International Centre (Mar 3) and Hammersmith Apollo (Mar 4, 5)



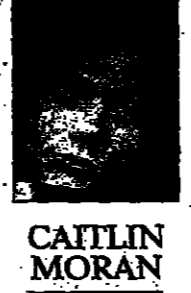
Two knights and a legend: John Lennon, George Martin and Paul McCartney during the making of *Sgt Pepper* in 1967

Celine the Fabs down the river

This has been the worst week for Beatles fans since John got shot in 1980. First, Michael Jackson, who bought the publishing rights to their back catalogue as effortlessly as you or I would rather more modestly buy one of their CDs, is reportedly in negotiations to flog a big chunk for the new Volkswagen Beetle ad campaign. Obvious targets for desecration are *Drive My Car*, *Day Tripper*, *The Long and Winding Road*, *Magical Mystery Tour* and *Why Don't We Do It in the Road?* While this last one would be quite amusing — seeing as it is one of Paul's embarrassing attempts at being as hard and weirdly bearded free-love bloke as John — the whole idea is gag-response disgusting. Pop songs whored to adverts suck. Every song that can truly be described as genius is part of the treasury of humanity; and to have any of these gifts inextricably linked with a pair of sweat-soaked trainers or a pair of diesel-burping cars is quite frankly as horrifying as the

Michael Jackson allowing Beatles songs to be used to flog cars is bad, but just wait until I tell you what George Martin has done to his boys

idea of every child born this year being "sponsored" by Microsoft, in return for having the logo branded on to its forehead. Beatles music, above any other music, has been kept safe from this form of repellent culture-raaping for so long one has to wonder what Jackson is thinking of. He doesn't need the money (£6.1 million, apparently) — spangly ankle-socks and thick, flaky make-up are still very cheap commodities. The Beatles songs couldn't be any more famous than they are, so it's not going to bump up the value of the back catalogue. The only reason I can possibly



CAITLIN MORAN

think of is that Jackson actually thinks these adverts will be brilliant pieces of art. In which case, we must damn him as a philistine and a fool, and show our bottoms to him. Maori-insult-style, next time he visits our country. If the Volkswagen hoo-ha wasn't bad enough news for George, Paul and Ringo, the second flank of attack on their peace of mind and spiritual thrilliness came from a very unlikely quarter — their old producer and father-figure, Sir George Martin. For those who haven't been taught the story of the Beatles just as thoroughly as all that Jesus stuff, Martin is

kind of like the Three Wise Men and the Forz rolled into one. Even though he was a posh old bloke with a very long face, he dug those four crazy guys and brought in all of his classical orchestra palaver to make their vision Titanic. It was he who turned *I am the Walrus*, *Strawberry Fields Forever* and *Tomorrow Never Knows* from a sketchy explanation by Lennon into something that still puckers your head into one giant goose-pimple. It was also Martin who went up on to the roof at Abbey Road at 2am to talk Lennon through a bad trip, even though he didn't have a clue about LSD. A duded fellow. A kingly man. So it makes his most recent action truly baffling. At the age of 72, Martin has decided to retire, as he's old and getting rather deaf. To end his career in a fitting way, Martin embarked on one last project — conceiving and producing the album *In My Life*, a testimonial-like collection of Beatles covers by Martin's Great Showbiz Mates.

Beyond this brief synopsis, I find further explanation rather difficult. Perhaps a track-listing will help. Celine Dion's *Here, There & Everywhere*, Jim Carrey's *I Am The Walrus*, Vanessa Mae's *Because*, Goldie Hawn "improves" *A Hard Day's Night* by assuring us she'll be "Okey-dokey", and making a little more-noise to illustrate how she'll be sleeping like a log; and Jeff Beck's boiled, mushy lift-music version of *Day in the Life* sounds like the Shadows being held at gunpoint and told to be even more boring than usual.

However, it was Phil Collins's stab — as in knife on cartilage and blood everywhere stab — at the epochal *Abbey Road* medley that finally made me start crying. Phil sings it like a man with the tiniest, thinnest, most pinched lips in the world. When the multi-tracked harmonies kick in, the difference between the original and the cover is the same as that between the front and the back-end of a gorgeous horse.

As all of these abominations are sanctioned by the only man in the world to hear *Tomorrow Never Knows* for the first time played live, by the Beatles, it's an astonishing lapse. Nine millionaires playing cold, dead cabaret sounds like the people in the expensive seats rattling their jewellery — which, I'm sure, Michael Jackson would think was art, too. ● *In My Life* is released by Echo Records on March 23

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TITANIC

— NOW SHOWING — AT CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

The media goes off to war

How prepared are the media for a Gulf conflict? Carol Midgley talks to newsmen on the front line

A full-page advertisement appeared in the broadsheet newspapers this week promoting CNN's coverage of the impending Gulf War. "That was then. This is now," it proclaimed, reminding us how it annihilated the opposition last time and how it intends to do so again.

The TV ratings war has already begun, even if the conflict hasn't. And the media, an all-powerful influence on the last Gulf War, is even more sophisticated than it was in 1991.

Technology is far more advanced. There will be a satellite dish aboard HMS Invincible, enabling the BBC, Sky and ITN to transmit live pictures from a warship for the first time. There are 12 satellite dishes stationed in Baghdad, not just the one which last time allowed CNN to dominate. There will be stiff opposition not just from Sky News, but also from the BBC, which now has a 24-hour news channel and its global news service, BBC World, to compete with CNN.

Equally important, journalists are older and wiser than they were during 1991, when they were virtually spooned information by the military.

Many journalists who covered the Gulf War admit to feeling duped by the Allied forces, who told them the story they wanted the world to hear — even when the details were not strictly true. Although common practice in wartime, most felt such one-sided accounts were out of place in the modern world.

Channel 4 News's Alex Thomson, who was based in Riyadh and Dhahran in 1991, but is now in Baghdad, says: "It was such a bizarrely controlled environment last time. You were asked to sit around and get your pictures from teams with the military. The pictures were all pooled and then assigned by the military to tell the story they wanted telling. That story was always technology — and they were very successful at painting the war as a game of Space Invaders."

"The British were a bit more candid. I was more critical of the Americans, who wanted to push the line of a smart, clean war in which nobody got killed and there was just collateral loss. It was a very specious, mendacious thing they were trying to do."

Journalists stationed in the Middle East say the atmosphere is different this time. Although the jingoism of the tabloids which was so evident in 1991 is now conspicuously diluted, Saddam Hussein is being more accommodating to TV and radio crews than the print media because they are more valuable to him and — in some respects — easier to censor.

George Alagiah is in Baghdad for the BBC with Rageh Omaar (John Simpson was refused a visa by the Iraqis, who disapproved of his 1991 reports because he tried to beat the censors by using colloquialisms and slang in his reports). He says that of the estimated 200 people allowed into Baghdad, few were from newspapers. "It is as if the Iraqis have decided this will be a TV war; it is about TV diplomacy and they will use it hugely to influence opinion," he says. "The big, big difference this time for us is that BBC World now exists as a rival to CNN. The Iraqis thought the BBC was just the voice of the British Government, but BBC World has shown it has an independent, unbiased voice."



The way it was: during the last Gulf conflict the military tried to control the media and to project an image of invincible high technology. But the truth was often rather different.

He said News 24 and BBC World would alter the stakes in reporting from the Gulf. "For people such as me, who have been always geared towards domestic news, there is suddenly a new outlet. You can go into the detail that you just can't cover on domestic news programmes."

Alagiah added that live transmission was a double-edged sword. "You can interview someone live — which is great — but you also have no control if it turns out to be utterly tedious because you have committed yourself. It's great when there is news, to break but not when you are just filling time."

The BBC's Kate Adie, ITN's Paul Davies and Sky News's James Matthews will pool the BBC satellite dish on board HMS Invincible. In theory, the ability to transmit live pictures will limit the military's ability to censor pictures. In reality, however, TV will not be allowed to show aircraft taking off live for strategic purposes, and also because war footage is rarely shown live because it risks beam-

ing violent scenes straight into people's homes.

But because the ship is essentially a "piece of Britain", the Iraqis own censorship does not apply and the BBC did not even have to apply for a licence for the dish.

"This time there will only be two real action areas for reporters," says Adie. "On a ship with the planes, or in Baghdad."

Davies, who last time was stationed with 7th Armoured Brigade, says: "It is quite likely that whatever gets launched will be launched at night. There won't be much point doing a live broadcast on deck if it is pitch black." He says pictures will be censored, as they were last time, but reporting with the military was still important. "We had lots of discussions about the fact that when you sign up with the military you sacrifice a bit of independence. You would not want that to be your only coverage, but it is still a vital part. There is a skill in taking what you are fed and putting it across in context."

The current atmosphere was markedly less tense than last time, he says. "We were giving the Iraqis credit for a lot of weaponry that it later emerged they didn't have. We thought the war was going to cost a lot of lives on the allied side; there were religious services in the sand and soldiers were persuaded to write their last letters. But when I was on Invincible two weeks ago there wasn't that same feeling that people won't be coming back. Our technology is much better than that which we face. There is a much greater awareness of the complex

political situation; last time it was a case of 'Our Boys and Monster Saddam', but it hasn't been that way at all this time."

ITN's Michael Nicholson, who spent more than two months aboard HMS Gloucester in 1991 and who will be in Bahrain this week, says the satellite aboard HMS Invincible will enable more journalistic freedom. "When you are going live, it is more difficult for the old admiral to put his blue pencil through your stuff. I don't think the media will be as censored this time by the military. All this smart bombing with missiles going down, chimney pots and turning corners wasn't quite as we were told."

"The press will be a little more adult this time, more diplomatic. Last time we went in on a UN mandate — this time it is really a case of Saddam saving face, or Clinton saving face."

CNN has sent 20 staff to Baghdad — including big guns such as Peter Arnett, Christiane Amanpour and Brent Sadler — who it estimates will cost an extra £1 million a week to keep in place. Sky, determined to take on CNN, has David Chater and Andrew Wilson in Baghdad, with correspondents in Kuwait, Israel and Amman.

ITN, serving Channel 4 and Channel 5, has sent 50 people to the region, and has three correspondents in Baghdad. The BBC, which has a bureau in Amman, has teams in Bahrain, Kuwait and Baghdad. BBC World alone reaches 50 million homes in 180 countries.

Ben Brown, based in Kuwait for the BBC, who was in Saudi Arabia last time, says: "It is rather different now. Other than Baghdad, there aren't such obvious places for TV crews to be. This time I don't think any of us will see the real war. The videos we will be given of planes hitting targets will be what the military choose to show us. They don't tend to show us the ones that miss. We have to be careful to say such pictures have been censored and chosen by the military."

Pilots are more reluctant to be interviewed this time, he says. "I don't think it is because the political climate is different. It is more for personal security. It makes it more difficult for a correspondent, but the worst bit is the waiting."

Some journalists complained last time that quirky details which told a more human story had to be suppressed — such as the fact that the allied soldiers had alcohol in their shampoo bottles. It was considered, reasonably, that it may offend the Saudis.

However, it emerged that the public expected things to be censored. A survey conducted after the last Gulf War found eight in ten viewers believed journalists covering a conflict should give false information if it confused the enemy and saved British lives.

But Alex Thomson was so angry about the experience of 1991 that afterwards he wrote a book, *Smokescreen: The Media, The Censors, The Gulf*. "I felt I was being used night after night," he said. "Trying to tell the real story was a complete nightmare but you had no independent means of checking the facts."

"Obviously, information will be controlled again this time, but at least we will know what to expect."

● The Times's Sam Kiley is reporting from Baghdad.

COMING SOON TO A SMALL SCREEN NEAR YOU? THE TELEVISION WAR REPORTERS



Preparing for a new conflict: George Alagiah is in Baghdad for the BBC. ITN's Michael Nicholson will be in Bahrain this week. Kate Adie of the BBC will be sharing the BBC satellite dish on board HMS Invincible. Channel 4 News's Alex Thomson is in Baghdad. Paul Davies, of ITN, is on board the Invincible.

Clean language from Evans above

TO LUNCH with Tony Stoller, the chief executive of the Radio Authority, which hands out licences and regulates commercial stations. One of his biggest concerns is the unsuitable amount of smutty comment made by DJs on breakfast shows listened to by family audiences. The authority recently censured Fox FM (Oxford), GWR (Wiltshire) and Noryspond (Aberdeen). Why is it happening? It seems commercial radio is in the grip of the Chris Evans effect. Local DJs are trying to shock-jock their way up the pole with copycat and provocative talk. But they're not adept at staying just on the right side of the taste line. Evans has attracted only one censure since moving to Virgin, after a string of Radio 1 excesses. Nothing beats the discipline of owning your own business.

CAROLINE AHERNE, slipping in and out of her Mrs Merton character with confusing ease, taunted BBC head of comedy, Geoffrey Perkins, during after-dinner questions at the Royal Television Society's annual bash. If comedy writers were such valuable assets, how come her new venture, a sitcom called *The Royle Family*, had suddenly had its writing team cut to three from four? Since they had to write just as many gags, why weren't they sharing the fourth salary? Perkins mumbled he knew nothing about it. *The Royle Family* is described as *Bread* meets Alf Garnett: they sit around a table and there are lots of long pauses. Perhaps that's why a fourth writer was dropped.

DANNY BUCKLAND, the new deputy editor of *The People*, served as its news editor until he finally quit in December — for *The Sun* — despairing at the way it was edited, first by the now deposed Bridget Rowe, then by her deputy, Leo Gould. Buckland says the turning point in the sizzling title's fortunes came four years ago when Rowe decided to splash on the story "I was raped by an Alien."

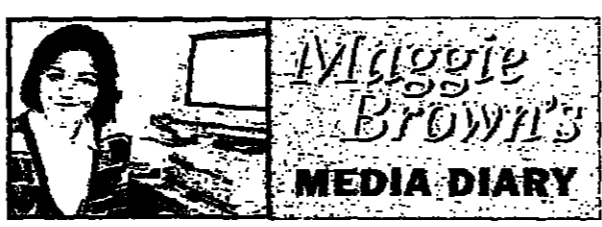
"I pleaded with Bridget 'Don't run it, don't put it in page one, say amazing Alien story page 5...' but it put 30,000 on sales, and after that the stories became increasingly bizarre." With Neil Wallis, the deputy editor of *The Sun* now editing *The People*, Buckland (currently working out his contract as *The Sun*'s TV editor) says reviving the title will be a long haul. His formula? "To be cutting and campaigning. To put the heat back into *The People* and proper journalism — though that doesn't mean we won't put soap stars on the front page from time to time. We are a tabloid."

ADVICE to Alan Rusbridger and Rosie Boycott, the editors of *The Guardian* and *The Independent* currently rowing over cut-price voucher schemes to nick each other's readers. Stories whinges don't shift copies. Why don't broadsheet editors spend energy on tasks that are useful for readers, such as devising a comprehensive contents index to their papers (*The Times* and *Financial Times* manage it). It's amazing how many people complain to me that they have missed articles relevant to them, due to the sheer weight of newsprint, especially at weekends.

THE DAYS of Gulf War television diplomacy returned with a vengeance this week. CNN, to the fury of rivals, was asked to carry a live programme in which President Clinton's foreign policy team, led by Madeleine Albright, took questions on Iraq... for the simple reason that it was a global news channel... watched in Iraq, perhaps by Saddam Hussein.

THE digital revolution is set to come to radio. The Radio Authority will advertise a commercial radio multiplex — extra channels — next month. The problem: there are no affordable digital radio receivers for people to buy; a price of £500 is projected. The BBC currently offers a digital radio service unique in broadcasting history: it has more transmitters than radio receivers. Before Stoller joined the authority he was chief executive of John Lewis's Tyrell & Weir store in Southampton. He says a retailing background is of great help in working out how quickly (or slowly) digital will catch on. "They will come down in price, but the printed circuit currently costs £100. Sets will only start to move at £49.95," Stoller said, adding fastidiously: "Make sure you don't say £49.99, John Lewis would never do that."

IT'S NOT all plain sailing for the prestigious European Audio Visual conference, hosted by the Government this April. There is



Sunday Business doesn't work

Jason Nissé on a dull relaunch

FIRST, the slogan is a killer. I can see the idea behind "The first working day of the week", but surely even the most dedicated business reader likes to think that Sunday is a day off.

Or am I splitting hairs? When *Sunday Business* (SB2) launched nearly two years ago there was no advertising, except for a lorry emblazoned with the slogan "Say your prayers", which parked near *The Sunday Times* offices.

Printing on pink paper is a better idea, however. First time around we thought it would make *Sunday Business* appear too much like a pale imitation of the *Financial Times*. This time I can see why it has been done, and as a way of differentiating the product from other Sunday broadsheets it is a clever move. It also makes it more difficult for the FT to launch a Sunday edition if it realises there is a profitable market.

And the new *Sunday Business* (SB2) is a professional product. It is well designed and it has more senior staff than its predecessor had — though we also had some exceptional talent, and the staff have prospered on other national titles. Two have been rehired: Gill South, who was a property writer, is now fashion correspondent and Julia Hutchinson is once again the general manager.

The lead for the relaunch is lame and falls into exactly the same trap as SB1 — going for a political story instead of an exclusive. First time

round it was "Blair embraces self-off culture", this time it is an interview with Gordon Brown, containing nothing of interest. People read business papers for business stories, not political stories given a business spin. Also, SB2's first issue has no hard-hitting business stories.

This would not matter so much if there was strong backing from the features pages or the columns. There is a set-piece interview, leading section two, with Alex Trotman. What? Apparently he is the chairman of Ford. To launch with a faceless head of a large corporation is simply dull.

This is the worst criticism I can make of SB2 — that it is dull. The so-called hard-hitting columns are not exciting. The diary isn't funny. The sports page is irrelevant — what is the point of printing football results when anyone who cares will already know what they are and would rather read some analysis. SB2's sports page is even woollier than the FT's, and that is saying something.

There is nothing that makes me want to pick up SB2 and read it. SB1 was bristling with scandal, intrigue and irreverence. It also constantly made careless errors. SB2 is trying to avoid those mistakes, but I fear it has gone too far the other way. Sunday is for rest and play, not work.

● Jason Nissé was an associate editor of *Sunday Business*. He is now News Editor, *Times Business*.



A brush with Basil

سكنا من الاصل

'I cannot understand people who say they like only Strauss or Mozart'

Sean Rafferty, new star of Radio 3, lays on the charm for Noreen Taylor

Walk around any town in the north of Ireland with Sean Rafferty, and you see him receive the kind of attention normally reserved for international celebrities.

"How's yourself?" people shout, waving gleefully and winking at him as if he's a close friend. Which, in a way, he is. For more than 20 years he has been an ever-present figure on BBC television and radio in Northern Ireland. He presented television news for a decade, ran various flagship radio programmes and then co-hosted a television DIY show, *Room For Improvement*, which has been shown across the network.

In Britain, the silver-haired and silver-tongued Rafferty was largely unknown. "I'd done occasional presenting on Radio 3 and 4," he says, "but I was quite happy where I was, with an enviable range of work. And Belfast is such a fabulous city, where the audience never leaves you in any doubt about your performance. If they don't like you they'll say: 'You were a heap of

crap last night, Sean. So, you might say, the fibres have been toughened."

Having the opportunity to spread my wings is wonderful, but I didn't actually go after a London move. I've never been one of those people anxiously looking up and down corridors, constantly on the alert for the next opportunity. I don't understand that kind of neurosis."

Last September Rafferty started presenting *Tune In*, Radio 3's drive-time show, and has since increased the listening figures by a handsome 14 per cent, attracting 80,000 extra listeners. Rafferty's style — a relaxed authority, combined with a warm delivery enlivened by a ready wit — has proved seductive.

He says: "I hope I can offer something to those in need of a little bit of soothing, the ones stuck in traffic hold-ups at the end of a rough day in the office, and the people who've had a mundane day at home."

His winning format is deceptively simple: two-and-a-half hours of



Sean Rafferty: "I hope I can offer something to those in need of soothing, the ones stuck in hold-ups or who have had a mundane day at home"

music, arts news, and interviews with a veritable *Who's Who* of the music world — composers, musicians and singers. But it was initially buffeted by accusations of dumbing down and, though it was never actually stated, the implication was clear: what could this chappie from Radio Ulster bring to Britain's premier classical music station?

There was a vague hint of the prejudice which assailed Rafferty's former colleague, Gerry Anderson, when he suffered hostility from Radio 4 listeners, and especially newspaper critics, a couple of years ago. It is a tribute to Rafferty's unflappability, not to mention his

encyclopaedic knowledge of classical music, that he has won over the sceptics.

Music is one of Rafferty's lifelong passions. A former violinist with the Ulster Youth Orchestra and a singer of madrigals with Ulster College of Music, he is chairman of the Opera Theatre Company in Dublin. But he refuses to share the views of elitists who view classical music as an intellectual ghetto, delighting in the chance to make it more accessible to a wider audience. Nor does he believe in rigid barriers between types of music.

"I don't understand people stuck in pigeon holes, people who say they only like Strauss or Mozart or whatever. It's like saying you can only have ever have one dish for lunch every day. Look, Sibelius hits a part of your psyche, as does Gershwin — and why not follow a piece of Elgar with Benny Goodman?"

"I'm not changing the scoring, or interfering with a Beethoven sonata, so I don't understand the fears of those mouthing tired old clichés about dumbing down. It's such an unimaginative response, considering the musical range of Radio 3, which you won't find anywhere in the world."

"I also want to reveal the human side of musicians by getting them to

different force, where it's pared down, to become the distinct spiritual element of its people."

Okay, so he knows about music, but how did he turn that into a day job? His start in broadcasting, some 30 years ago, came about by chance. He began his working life in a Belfast accountant's office and says: "I realised how much I hated it only when I had to stay home with flu and discovered I enjoyed flu more than the job."

Then he bumped into Ronald Mason, the head of radio drama, at an Irish heritage meeting. He thought there might be a slot for a researcher on a television programme being presented by Gloria Hunniford. "Anyway," says Rafferty, "Gloria got sick one day and I found myself standing in. And that seemed to be that. I'm one of those weirdos who actually finds being behind a camera or a mike perfectly natural, a more real way of communicating than facing someone."

Reporting jobs followed, and in Seventies Belfast it meant finding oneself huddled in a doorway on the way to work, waiting for a bomb to go off. It was an extraordinary time and place for a journalist, when even the routine diary assignments were inevitably life and death situations. "Instead of returning home at night you slept on a camp bed in the studios," he says.

The reflexes honed in such an atmosphere are still visible in Rafferty's quick-fire responses, which complement his other great talent for telling long anecdotes. No wonder he reigns as a court wit in fashionable saloons around Ireland.

But it won't be long before England falls to his charm. Within a month in London he could already be seen in the Groucho Club, hands aloft, waving to everyone, as familiar with the members and staff as he is with shoppers in a Belfast street.

Irish connections remain important. "I try to get back to Donegal once or twice a month, just because I miss it so desperately and it's the perfect contrast with London, which is so amazing at the moment."

With a passion for people and music, he really has found his own paradise for the moment. "I'm enjoying myself, and I think people sense enthusiasm and 'respond.' It's this, he thinks, which helps to make a great broadcaster. "I believe it's to do with feeling yourself part of a circle, not separate. That's something you can't fake."

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Friday Business doesn't work

Diana deserves the truth

The Prime Minister complains of "tacky and inappropriate" books, films and souvenirs occasioned by the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. Frances Shand Kydd castigates claims made by myself and Scott MacLeod that the Princess might have lived had she been taken to hospital sooner. And an aggressive and rude Talk Radio host, John Snow, insults us on the air in the crudest manner. Do I detect a certain overreaction in response to our book *Death of a Princess*?

Apparently, many people in Britain feel it is inadmissible to broach the subject of Diana's death in a book. As journalists, however, we cannot accept the idea that an event that shocked and saddened hundreds of millions of people around the world is off limits for serious, responsible investigation.

From the moment she walked down the aisle with the Prince of Wales in 1981, Diana was a public figure. Her death, like all deaths, was tragic. But why cannot a journalist write about a tragedy? In what qualitative way was Diana's tragedy different from the death of John F. Kennedy, the crash over Lockerbie or the explosion of the Challenger space shuttle? To have the event recalled may well be disturbing for Diana's family, yet what I find "tacky and inappropriate" is not this sober book but the shrill, lurid headlines about it in the tabloid press. Perhaps we would all be well served if Fleet Street would cool it a bit.

The claim that we are apologists for Mohamed Al Fayed is malicious and ill-founded. Like any serious journalists undertaking such a project, we contacted Mr Al Fayed to request an interview. Any honest reader who compares our interview with *The Mirror*'s last week will see that we presented his views with discretion, reserve and brevity. There are many aspects of our book that will hardly ingratiate us with Mr Al Fayed: the charges against him contained in the famous DTI report are

Thomas Sancton replies to British press criticism of the controversial book *Death of a Princess*

fully described, as are the details of his admitted political corruption of MPs.

Yet, given the jaundiced British view of this cheeky Egyptian who dared to take over Harrods and aspire to UK citizenship, our attempt to present an even-handed portrait is intolerable. We painted Fayed, warts and all; Fleet Street denounces us for not painting just the warts.

There is no small degree of hypocrisy in this reaction. Many newspapers that criticised the book would have been only too happy to have run the serialisation had they not been beaten to the punch by *The Times*. The day our serialisation began, for example, the *Daily Mail* ran a spoiler by Tom Bower, who is married to the *Mail's* associate features editor, and who went on to trash our book as a "mouthpiece" for Mohamed Al Fayed in a *Sunday Times* review.

The choice of Mr Bower as a reviewer is astonishing, given that he was our rival in reporting on the tragedy and the Fayed's and had a major conflict of interest. In early September he flew to Paris in Fayed's helicopter and stayed at the Ritz. He then launched into a critical "unauthorised" biography of the Egyptian once our book project appeared on the horizon.

Y es, we made use of certain information provided by Mr Al Fayed, but it was checked and counterbalanced by other sources. His claim that the couple had wedding plans, for example, coincided with the accounts of three other people: Ritz president Frank Klein, Dodi's butler Rene Delorm and Dodi's stepuncle, Hassan Yasseen. It has been argued that these are all suspect sources, beholden to Al Fayed. But Delorm never even met Al Fayed until Dodi's death and has since fallen out with him. Yasseen is from a

branch of the family that has long feuded with the Al Fayed's and would sooner walk on hot coals than invent a story to please Mohamed.

Moreover, other sources close to the couple have spoken of the seriousness of their love; Richard Kay, for one, wrote in the *Daily Mail*, and reiterated in his conversations with Scott MacLeod, that he believed it "likely" the couple would wed. Those of Diana's (mostly anonymous) "friends" now discrediting the wedding plans are free not to believe our sources, but we are no less free to find these multiple accounts convincing and to



Diana: still doubts

maintain that the jewel Diana selected from a line of engagement rings was in fact... an engagement ring.

Rosa Monckton now writes that Diana told her any ring Dodi might offer would go "firmly on the fourth finger of my right hand". Monckton also quotes Annabel Goldsmith as saying Diana remarked to her that she needed a new marriage "like a bad rash on my face". (Note that we are now into third-hand sourcing.) These are interesting accounts by two people who were certainly close to Diana and privy to her thinking. They are also people who may well wish to protect her memory and embellish her image. I am not convinced

notions is to understand them. We also looked into the pregnancy rumours, since they are central to the conspiracy theories, and found no concrete evidence to prove or disprove them. Rosa Monckton, who was with Diana in Greece in mid-August, wrote this week that it was "biologically impossible" for the Princess to have been pregnant at that time. If that means what I think it means, it is a fairly convincing indication which we would have been delighted to include in our book had Ms Monckton seen fit to accept our repeated interview requests.

As we argued in the book, it is important to get the truth out in order to cut short the conspiracy theories. If our book is now prompting people such as Rosa Monckton to come forth with new information that they had been withholding, then we have made a positive contribution towards getting the facts out. Prince Charles himself has recently said that he wanted the investigation wrapped up quickly in order to provide answers and put an end to the painful speculation. To the extent that our book has revealed new facts and spurred others to do so, we have provided a useful service.

Those who have focused on this handful of issues have largely missed the point: the essence of this book lies not in its controversial revelations but rather in its authoritative assembling of a large body of facts, information and testimony. Instead of imposing any overall analysis, it is a compendium from which the reader can draw his or her own conclusions. This is a method that works well when readers approach the book with an open mind. But that may be an all-too-rare quality in some quarters of British opinion these days, given the hysterical reactions this book has encountered.

Death of a Princess, by Thomas Sancton and Scott MacLeod is published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson

Boycott finds The Guardian is no angel

A liberal newspaper of high minds and high ideals, deserving causes and bleeding hearts it may well be — but never doubt the commercial ruthlessness of *The Guardian*. It sees off perceived enemies with bare-knuckled determination. Seizing on the removal last month of Andrew Marr, the fourth editor of *The Independent* within four years, *The Guardian* has moved in for the kill.

Within days of Marr's departure, 96,000 *Independent* buyers got a mailshot from *Guardian* Editor Alan Rusbridger and Will Sutton, Editor of *The Observer*, offering the papers free for a week and then for 20p (40p at weekends) for another two weeks.

Unnamed "media analysts" (usually a pseudonym for the authors), said the letter, believed that the "sacking" of Marr effectively signalled the end of *The Independent* as originally conceived by Andreas Whitlam Smith. A paper set up to challenge a few powerful press barons had itself been swallowed up by a large newspaper group — the Mirror — with experience only in running tabloids. Adding insult to injury, the two editors named in *Independent* writers who had left because they preferred the "editorial ethos" of *The Guardian* and *The Observer*.

An "appalled" Rosie Boycott, now Editor of both *Independent* titles, instantly fired off an angry response to Rusbridger, accusing him of treachery. "Recently your papers and mine have been fighting the might of Rupert Murdoch. Yet here you are, supposed standard-bearers for liberalism, blatantly and unashamedly using underhand tactics with only one intention in mind: to try and put us out of business. You know we are the fourth newspaper in the market, yet you appear to have decided that we do not have the right to exist. Shame on you."

Rusbridger smashed Boycott's ball back — pointing out that twice in the past five months *The Independent* had used mailshots to try to lure *Guardian* and *Observer* readers. "I didn't think this was 'underhand'. I didn't think 'Blow me, here is a supposed standard-bearer for liberalism blatantly and unashamedly trying to put us out of business'. I did not even think Andrew and Rosie have decided that we don't have a right to exist. I thought: 'That's brilliant! We should try that one day.'"

The *Independent*, Rusbridger added, had done its best to steal *The Guardian's* advertising and readers. "That's life. We'll do the same to you. That's life, too." Game and set to Rusbridger. The match itself has yet to be decided but is moving increasingly in *The Guardian's* favour.

Yet seven years ago, when *The Independent* was at its peak, the playing field was very different. *The Independent* was selling 404,000 copies a day — within 11,000 of *The Times* and 40,000 of *The Guardian*. Seven years on *The Independent* still sells 410,000, but *The Guardian* has slipped back to cover price and that drops to 200,000.

The Guardian recognised the threat from *The Independent* within days of its launch in 1986. Peter Preston, who was then the Editor, even floated the idea of *The Guardian* and *The Times* informally joining forces against the impudent trespasser. Subsequently he gambled his editorship on a radical revamp of *The Guardian*, developed supplements for classified ads, and helped to back the short-lived *Sunday Correspondent* so that it could fight the new *Independent* on Sunday and thereby weaken the daily. Now, on whatever index selected, *The Guardian* is advancing and *The Independent* is falling back (see table).

With a much smaller budget, and still further staff redundancies expected, Boycott, as her letter revealed, is certainly the underdog in this fight — but she has made a bold start. The Marr revamp has been swept aside and a new front page recreated. She is assiduously "love-bombing" the stars she wants to keep. At the Sunday title, she launched a campaign for cannabis law reform and stuck at it. This week she launched her first *Independent* campaign: for tax breaks for working mothers. She is a fighter — "gutsy", according to her staff. Yet as *Guardian* insiders point out, the pot cannot call the kettle black. She cannot cry foul when subjected to fair and standard competition from *The Guardian*.

THE BATTLE FOR READERS

	1997 Jul-Dec	% change in Jul-Dec '97
ALL	Guardian 1277	3.5%
	Independent 745	-17.5%
Saturday	Guardian 182	0.8%
	Independent 188	-7.5%
Women	Guardian 954	10.8%
	Independent 305	-11.5%
Under 45	Guardian 758	3.2%
	Independent 450	-14.5%

Source: NPS



Brian MacArthur

Independent falling back (see table). With a much smaller budget, and still further staff redundancies expected, Boycott, as her letter revealed, is certainly the underdog in this fight — but she has made a bold start. The Marr revamp has been swept aside and a new front page recreated. She is assiduously "love-bombing" the stars she wants to keep. At the Sunday title, she launched a campaign for cannabis law reform and stuck at it. This week she launched her first *Independent* campaign: for tax breaks for working mothers. She is a fighter — "gutsy", according to her staff. Yet as *Guardian* insiders point out, the pot cannot call the kettle black. She cannot cry foul when subjected to fair and standard competition from *The Guardian*.

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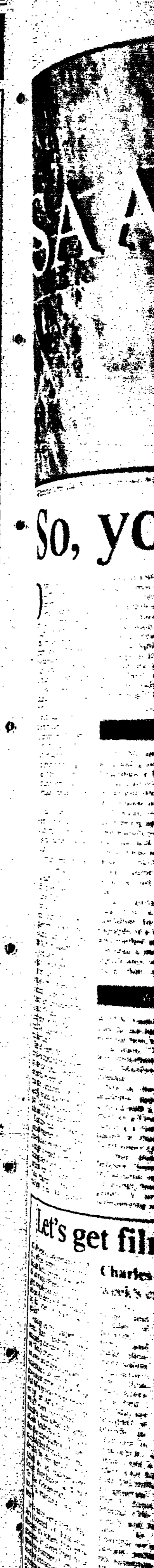
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Winning formula: Nick Chapman was offered a job with Saatchi & Saatchi after a long and grueling haul of tests and a one-to-one interview. "It's easy to feel obliged to do something different, but it's a risky strategy," he says

So, you want to be in advertising?

Once upon a time, advertising was a career one drifted into. Advertising agencies had a remarkably laissez-faire approach to recruitment, relying on graduates from senior management alma maters—usually Oxford and Cambridge. Newcomers, meanwhile, had to get by on good contacts, self-confidence and a dose of mild eccentricity.

How things change. Agencies have introduced rigorous selection procedures to assess a broad range of skills, from powers of persuasion to resilience and creative thinking. It now takes stamina, perseverance and grim determination even to make it through the door.

Each year Saatchi & Saatchi, one of the best-known names in advertising, receives thousands of inquiries about its graduate recruitment programme, which recruits a dozen or so trainee account-handlers each year. So it developed a psychological obstacle course which only the fittest survive. The aim is to attract the best young talent into the business, says Saatchi's client services director, Marilyn Baxter. Today's young hopefuls could be the agency's senior executives within ten years. "We have developed a series of tests with an occupational psychologist to identify key competencies," she says. "In each, participants focus on the task in hand. We, however, focus on their approach."

The 36 shortlisted applicants who attended the agency's two-day final selection earlier this month got more than they bargained for. An agency tour and talk from last year's intake was followed by a day and a half of timed tests. Candidates had to make a series of presentations to interviewers and work in teams on a range of timed exercises, ranging from role play (sell a perfume with no smell) to model-making—build a machine from A4 paper,

Meg Carter on the gruelling route into advertising agencies

Sellopape and a ball of string. All tests were conducted under the beady eye of Saatchi staff. The selection procedure also included dinner on the Friday night in central London—not to check whether candidates used the right knife and fork, but to get to know them better. "For us it's about getting to know them as people: what are they really like? Are they interesting?" Ms Baxter says.

"After the second bottle of wine, they stop pretending." Testing ended on the Saturday evening and eight successful candidates were told the next day. By Saturday night, most of the selection has been made. "It's only the borderline cases that merit much debate," Ms Baxter says.

Saatchi's wish-list of skills breaks down into four areas. There is "personal drive"—Ms Baxter defines this as "high energy, a positive outlook and self-motivation"; team skills "persuasive, straight talking and sensitive"; practical intelligence and, of course, self confidence. "We

also look for a conceptual grasp of advertising, and passion. You can't last and be lukewarm about ads." The system works, the agency insists. Many of Saatchi's senior managers today were part of previous years' graduate intake. But it is also a reflection of how agencies such

as Saatchi have been forced to adapt to the changing expectations of graduates. In recent years, advertising has lost talent to other sectors. Despite the industry's reputation during the Eighties for six-figure salaries, long lunches and Porsches, a recession and subsequent

downsizing of agencies persuaded many of the country's best graduates to look for careers elsewhere. Today, agencies must compete for high fliers with other sections of the media, the City, management consultancy and law. And starting salaries are modest—about £10,000 for an ad agency trainee. The appeal, however, is a career in a creative environ-

ment for which the eventual rewards can be significant. After a year or so, account handling trainees can become an account executive. Two years on, they can move up to account supervisor and after that, account director on a salary of £40,000 or more. Agency executives' salaries, meanwhile, run into six figures.

Not that any of this year's candidates own up to being motivated by cash, of course. They talk enthusiastically about their passion for advertising, their desire to combine creative and business skills and the search for a career they can really enjoy. Even so, behind the depreciation lies steady determination. Of the thousands who apply, only about 400 will end up joining the industry this year.

WHAT ARE THE AGENCIES LOOKING FOR?

GETTING into an advertising agency can be a long and gruelling haul. For 21-year-old Nick Chapman, a final-year student studying English at University College London, application forms and interviews had to be juggled with a dissertation on Virginia Woolf.

"It wasn't easy," he says. "I applied to ten advertising agencies—all had different forms. One wanted you to outline your life on a side of A4, the next told you to focus on the most exciting things you've ever done in just one line."

Last autumn, Saatchi asked candidates for photographs of a loved and loathed advertisement, a place of significance, something that made

them angry, and a self-portrait. Chapman created an ad for the Government's drink-driving campaign by photographing four smashed toy cars in a pint glass filled with beer. "It's easy to feel obliged to do something different but it's a risky strategy," he admits.

"Some people I've met did wacky things—such as ignoring the questions and writing one letter in each box spelling out 'When is the interview?'"



Applicants: Isabella Gurdol, Gemma Walton

For her application to Saatchi, Gemma Walton produced a photo-montage with a picture of herself aged five and Lestrade letters erupting from her head. "The creative space inside a child's mind," she explains. "People

say 'Just be yourself,' but that's really difficult because you are desperate to impress."

Isabella Gurdol, a 24-year-old studying history and Italian at London University, says the main difficulty was assessing what an agency were looking for. "In the end, I gave up. You really just can't tell."

All three made it through one-to-one first interviews and into Saatchi's final selection round. Gemma Walton and Nick Chapman were both offered jobs.

There is a fine line between standing out and

being domineering, Ms Walton says. "The process was obviously designed to draw out every skill. But the danger was in coming across as too bossy with others in the group."

Like Ms Gurdol, she found it difficult to gauge exactly what the interviewers wanted. Nick Chapman got interviews with only half the agencies to which he applied. "Having finally decided what I really wanted to do, this was quite a shock for me," he says. "I thought 'Am I fooling myself? Have I got it completely wrong?'"

WE WANT TEAM PLAYERS — BUT NOT CLONES

WHEN Saatchi & Saatchi are interviewing, they do not look for the person who does each exercise best, but for candidates who work well in a team. "The outcome of these tests is less important than how participants cope," says Marilyn Baxter, the client services director.

Nor do they necessarily recruit the most academic applicants. One recent candidate arrived with a dozen A-grade O levels, four A-level As, a First at university and experience of running a company. He was just 22. But he hadn't a clue who was the landlady of EastEnders' Queen Vic.

Group testing is essential, Ms Baxter believes. "Someone who seems confident and self-assured one-to-one can be annoying or irritatingly bouncy when put with the rest of a group. A lot of them turn out to be domineering and bumptious in a team."

As well as those with specific skills, Saatchi also look for people with a personality which will fit into the corporate culture. "This, however, is hard to define to outsiders. A 'Saatchi person' is spirited, opinionated and a creative thinker," says the group director, Jeremy Pine. "We are reluctant to clone—we pride ourselves on our diversity. Every client is different so we need a variety of different people, too." Even so, the selection process naturally favours some.

"Successful applicants tend to be from better universities. However, all candidates are considered. If someone is a good candidate and has a bad day, then they might have a better day elsewhere and still get into the industry. If they keep having bad days, perhaps they are not right for advertising. You have to be self-confident and able to stand and fight your corner."

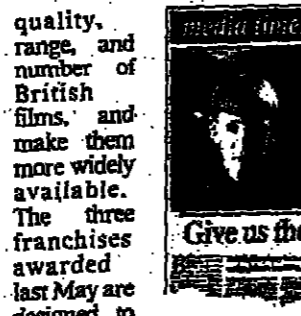
Let's get film funding into focus

AT A time of unprecedented box office success, when the future looks promising, why do so many otherwise intelligent people persist in writing about the British film industry in tones of doom and gloom?

Writing in this paper last week, Mark Andrews (the managing director of Tsunami Film) manages to score an above average number of tendentious assertions and downright errors of fact. The *Full Monty* was never rejected by the Arts Council. It wasn't even submitted for funding. And what alchemy allows Andrews to declare that the introduction of commercial film franchises (incidentally by the Arts Council acting as an independent lottery distributor, and not "by the Government") will have "a marginal effect at best?"

Let's have some facts. The Arts Council of England, through its lottery-film programme, is committed to a growing number of separate funding initiatives linked by a common strategic purpose. We seek to enhance the

Charles Denton responds to last week's criticisms by Mark Andrews



From last week's Times

quality, range, and number of British films, and make them more widely available. The three franchises awarded last May are designed to provide investment in production, on a minority basis, over a period of six years. Our funding of more than £92 million should help to generate 90 or so new British films and attract around £350 million of industry and banking investment. As a cardinal principle, we seek to generate private-sector investment, not substitute for it, and to provide a stable source of funds which will enable a significant number of producers to plan ahead. Mark Andrews may well

think the Arts Council investment "small and spread too thin", and he goes on to decry the fact that funds are committed in a contractual framework which provides for recoupment and a share of net profit. But we are unashamedly intervening in the commercial sector, and believe that public money invested deserves to share in any commercial success. All such investment returns will be rolled back into our film programme.

Mr Andrews is right (he has to be right somewhere) to highlight the importance of distribution. That is why the Arts Council insists on viable distribution plans before it will fund individual projects. Stefano Hatfield is away.

Funds available for a planned scheme to help with wider distribution are not large, however, and nobody at the Arts Council underestimates the task of encouraging the UK distributor in a struggle with the Americans.

Our films should have to compete for their screen time on solid commercial grounds, and the idea of "film theatre for British films" seems to me to be a doomed piece of jingoistic social engineering.

Our new consultation paper seeks industry views on possible funding schemes for development. Later in the year, we hope to be able to move forward on a further scheme designed to help fund innovative, experimental, less commercially-focused film work. It is an ambitious programme of lottery-funded intervention, and I believe that an overwhelming majority of the film industry welcomes it.

Charles Denton is Chairman of the Arts Council Lottery Film Panel. Stefano Hatfield is away.

THE TIMES

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EDUCATION

This bill must be paid

Ron Dearing on the importance of creating a learning society



Ron Dearing: "We need the most effective system of education and training in the world"

Around the time of the World Bank assessment of the economic prospects of China, I was sitting next to Lee Hsien Loong, the Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore. I asked him how Singapore planned to compete with China, the potential economic giant of the world. "By being ten to 15 years up the learning curve," was the answer.

That need to stay ahead is the reality facing the developed world. Everywhere nations recognise that this means investment in people. Governments compare their participation rates in post-18 education and training to judge whether they are staying up with the game.

Britain fell well below the game in the 1980s, but made a commitment to double the proportion of young people in higher education by 2000. That was achieved five years early. (That achievement, and the 40 per cent reduction in unit costs over the past 20 years, is one of the little-known success stories of British higher education.)

Having caught up with the game, the issue is to stay there. That is why the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (NCIHE), which reported last summer, urged the Government to remove the cap on numbers of students. We must stay up with the game in all post-18 education and training, whether that takes place in further or higher education, or in the workplace. If we do not, we cannot compete with China and India.

This big problem is cost, and especially in the public sector. A century ago to be competitive a nation needed to educate its children to age 12. It became 14, then 16. Now 18 is increasingly becoming the age

New knowledge comes from research. University research is another little-known success story. Over the past decade, British universities with little increase in funding have been winners in research productivity: on conventional criteria ranking only after the U.S. But we have not been renewing our assets. There is an imperative need for action — by Government, by industry which benefits from the research, and by the charities that support research. Universities must accept the need for more collaborative use of costly equipment and in return, for money from industry, meet its needs.

As Sir Iain Vallance, the chairman of BT, has said: "The future does not come cheap." We have to recognise that reality. And as Derek Bok, the former president of Harvard, said: "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance."

So, as a nation, we need a collective recognition that the future has a price: the bill must be met. Employers must invest in their staff. The State must ensure that the needs of the unemployed and disadvantaged are met. And individuals who get a high rate of personal return on society's investment in them, must make some contribution, when they are earning, to the next generation's education.

So when I read the Government's consultation paper on lifelong learning and its responses to the reports on higher and further education, due to be published on Wednesday, I shall be looking for: The will to see that the bill will be met collectively. Support for standards and quality. A commitment to opportunities for people of all ages and abilities — a policy of inclusiveness.

From universities, colleges and employers, I look for a commitment to create the most effective system of education and training in the world, and a joint commitment by us all to truly create a learning society. Britain's future depends on it.
 Lord Dearing was chairman of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education

Lessons in managing a school's business

Being a head teacher means being able to deal with constant change. Ray Wild wonders how they cope

Head teachers to learn leadership and "poor schools to get £2 million super heads" — just two recent press headlines drawing attention to the need for changes in the management of Britain's schools. The first report refers to a leadership programme for 25,000 head teachers being launched later this year by the Open University and the National Association of Head Teachers "in the latest sign that the Government is turning to business leaders for ideas about raising school standards". The other talks about highly paid top head teachers and management gurus being brought together to take over underperforming schools in "education action zones".

Both these activities pose a question mark over the present ability of head teachers to be "good" managers simply because they have been good and experienced teachers. This is an age-old puzzle that is relevant not just to schools and colleges, but to the working world at large.

There has never been a greater need to help those in this position. More and more people are finding themselves in transition from expert to manager as organisations either shed their structural tiers and bring new talent up through (what was) the ranks and/or devolve responsibilities by handing the authority and the budgets from central departments to smaller units.

In addition, school managers are being required to manage against different objectives, in more complex situations and with greater visibility and accountability. The political scene changes and along with it come new rules and new roles. In short, being a head teacher now means being caught up in

constant change — and being watched and monitored as you try to get to grips with managing amid all this change. Will the new professional qualification for head teachers, for example, really go some way to facilitating better school management? Heads of schools and colleges need to change. They need to know more about the strategies of different types of organisation, who are able to benchmark against other types of organisation and who have therefore acquired expectations, aspirations, attitudes and confidence.

Head teachers are unlikely to be adequately prepared, or to be prepared quickly enough, for their new roles even though they may be working alongside those in identical situations or getting on the job experience. The new head teachers' qualification programme — which is intended to develop leadership and management skills and which is aimed at up to 9,000 participants in the first year alone — will make some contribution. But unless these individuals also get out of their own world and work alongside different people and are challenged by them, they will not be equipped to change their schools. Many head teachers simply need to be peeled away from the schooling environment if they are to learn forward.

Transformation was never achieved by training alone — and so it is more than likely that the action being planned or undertaken so far will not change the way in which our schools and colleges are run or perform.

Professor Ray Wild is the principal of Henley Management College. He is also a tertiary college governor and was previously a governor of a technical and a sixth-form college.



Professor Ray Wild

How the Internet is being used to teach children foreign languages

Bringing the world closer

The Virtual Language Project will help British primary schools pupils to learn foreign languages by linking them up to continental classmates on computer.

The £550,000 European Union initiative links four member countries, Britain, Greece, Germany and Finland and by next September pilot primaries in each country will be using the new IT packages and e-mail to learn about their counterparts' languages and culture.

Both he and the EU are convinced that the British would be better linguists if we started learning languages at a younger age.

THE TIMES DILLONS SCIENCE FORUM

The scientists and our future

FOUR OF THE WORLD'S leading scientists will debate with Melvyn Bragg "Why science matters" at a Times/Dillons forum. The experts are Professor Susan Greenfield, Professor of Pharmacology at Oxford; Professor Sir Roger Penrose, Rouse Ball Professor of Mathematics at Oxford; Professor Sir Martin Rees, the Royal Astronomer; and Dr John Gribbin, Visiting Fellow in Astronomy at the University of Sussex. They will discuss the impact of science on our lives and our future and explore scientific breakthroughs.



The forum, on March 5 at 8pm at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1, marks the publication of Bragg's book, *On Giants' Shoulders - Great Scientists and their Discoveries* from Archimedes to DNA (Hodder & Stoughton, £12.99). The admission price of £10 (cones £7.50) includes £2 off the book.

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The British component is being run from Swansea University. "We are developing project-based curriculum materials that will fit into schools' European studies courses," Dr Jim Milton, the initiative's co-ordinator from Swansea's Centre for Applied Language Studies, says. "For example, we're investigating a project on Eskimo life as a means of introducing Finnish. Pupils would see images of Eskimos on the computer, they would hear them speaking Finnish, and then would be able to make direct contact with sister schools in Finland to discuss what they had seen and heard."

However, getting rid of teachers is not the project's intention. Staff from all the participating schools will have to be trained to use the new materials. Providing the IT training is another of the project's goals, as the EU is keen to encourage electronic communication between schools in member countries. The participants include universities in Swansea, Stuttgart, Finland and Athens; German and Greek computer software companies, plus German publishers and, of course, the Continent's primary schools.

The information garnered could be collated in a class project on the Eskimos. Similarly, for the British, Germans and Finns communicating with Athens, the history and legends of ancient Greece will take on new meaning. After exploring historical locations and events on the computer, and hearing modern Greek being spoken, there will be opportunities to communicate directly with Athenian children.

In turn, the British schools will be invited to help the Europeans to brush up on their English. "However, we expect that European understanding of English will be far greater than our pupils' familiarity with German, Greek or Finnish," Dr Milton says. "On the Continent most countries introduce foreign languages to six or seven-year-olds. We only start in the secondary school, and even then we only

try to use the new IT packages and e-mail to learn about their counterparts' languages and culture. The British component is being run from Swansea University. "We are developing project-based curriculum materials that will fit into schools' European studies courses," Dr Jim Milton, the initiative's co-ordinator from Swansea's Centre for Applied Language Studies, says. "For example, we're investigating a project on Eskimo life as a means of introducing Finnish. Pupils would see images of Eskimos on the computer, they would hear them speaking Finnish, and then would be able to make direct contact with sister schools in Finland to discuss what they had seen and heard."

Virtual travel, however, undertaken on a computer from the comfort of a classroom, gives pupils the illusion of visiting Finland, Greece or Germany without the expense and hassle of having to get there.

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Further particulars of the post (which all candidates are asked to consult) may be obtained from the Assistant Registrar, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, George Street, OX1 2AR (Tel 01865 278700) to whom formal applications naming three referees (seven typed copies, or only one from applicants based overseas) should be sent by Thursday 19 March 1998.

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For an informal discussion, please contact Dr Paul Hartley, Dean of The School of International Studies and Law on 01203 838000.

For further details and application forms please telephone 01203 838120, email per051@coventry.ac.uk or write enclosing a large self-addressed envelope to Personnel Department, Coventry University, Priory Street, Coventry CV1 5FB. Closing date: Friday 27 March 1998.

We would particularly welcome applications from black/ethnic minority groups and people with disabilities who are under-represented in the University.

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سكندرية

Severing costs not covered by order

General of Berna Insurance Co Ltd v Jardine Reinsurance Management Ltd and Others

Before Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice May and Sir Brian Neill (Judgment February 12)

Where a contentious business agreement was in force between a client and his solicitors, costs referable to parts of litigation which the client did not have the benefit of an order for costs had to be taken out of account in applying section 60(3) of the Solicitors Act 1974 to determine the costs due to the client from the other side.

The Court of Appeal so held allowing an appeal by the defendants. Jardine Reinsurance Management Ltd, Jardine Thompson Graham Ltd and TGI Anstalt, from an interim decision of Mr Justice Tuckey on the taxation of costs on July 25, 1997 holding that the plaintiffs, General of Berna Insurance Co Ltd, were entitled to claim from the defendants on taxation hourly expense rates including uplift which were greater than they themselves were obliged to pay their own solicitors under a contentious business agreement pursuant to section 59 of the Solicitors Act 1974.

Section 59 of the 1974 Act, as amended by the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990, provides: "(1) ... a solicitor may make an agreement in writing with his client as to his remuneration in respect of any contentious business done, or to be done, by him ... providing that he shall be remunerated by a gross sum or by a salary, or other fixed sum, or by a higher or lower rate than that which he would otherwise have been entitled to be remunerated."

Section 60 of the 1974 Act provides: "(3) A client shall not be entitled to recover from any other person under an order for the payment of any costs to which a contentious business agreement relates more than the amount payable by him to his solicitor in respect of those costs under the agreement."

Mr Sydney Kenridge, QC and Mr Terry Mieligan, solicitor, for the defendants; Mr John Lockey for the plaintiffs.

LORD JUSTICE MAY said the plaintiffs were an insurance company which had sued the defendants in connection with the management of underwriting risks. The actions had eventually been settled by consent and in February 1994 Jardine had made a voluntary interim payment of £1.5 million towards the insurance companies' costs.

In August 1995 a draft bill of costs was produced which claimed a total amount of £3,370,753.97 inclusive of disbursements. More than £3 million of that was solicitors' profit costs.

During the taxation various orders were made in Jardine's favour for inter-actuary matters for which Jardine had lodged bills totalling £7,000,000.

The insurance companies had been represented in the litigation first by Freshfields, under an agreement which did not stipulate charging rates, and later by Barlow Lyde & Gilbert under a contentious business agreement within section 59 of the 1974 Act.

The rules of court stipulated that on taxation solicitors' costs should be worked out by assessing appropriate hourly expense rates which might then be increased by various percentage uplifts for care and

conduct to reflect the complexity of the work.

Some of the rates claimed by the insurance companies using that method were greater than the equivalent rate which Barlow Lyde & Gilbert were entitled to charge under the contentious business agreement.

The appeal raised the question whether the difference should be allowed on taxation. It was suggested that more than £700,000 turned on the issue, though the total amount of Barlow Lyde & Gilbert exceeded the amount claimed on taxation. It turned on the construction of section 60(3) of the 1974 Act.

The section was said to enshrine a common law principle, the "indemnity principle", that costs were normally to be paid in compensation for which the receiving party had or was obliged himself to pay.

Jardine contended that the indemnity principle should be applied, where appropriate, on an item by item basis. The insurance companies contended that it only provided a global cap, so that the receiving party might recover on taxation uplifted hourly expense rates which were judged to be reasonable even if they exceeded the rates which Barlow Lyde & Gilbert were entitled to receive from their client, provided the total allowed on taxation did not exceed the actual costs which Barlow Lyde & Gilbert were entitled to recover from their client.

Each of the parties' cases had its problems. The problem with the insurance companies' case was that if costs orders had been made disallowing parts of the receiving party's costs or if the companies themselves had been ordered to pay some of the paying party's

costs, the costs which they themselves had to pay their solicitors for those parts of the litigation were available to contribute to the cap.

That seemed wrong and Mr Justice Tuckey had held otherwise.

A difficulty with Jardine's case was that if the cap was not applied once only, but to individual items, the paying party could get what might appear to be a windfall where some costs were reduced below individual cap because, for instance, they were held to be unreasonable, while others were capped at the agreed rate although, but for the cap, they would have been allowed in a greater amount.

In his Lordship's judgment, Mr Justice Tuckey had been right to conclude that costs referable to parts of the litigation for which the receiving party did not have the benefit of an order for costs had to be taken out of account in determining the application of section 60(3).

That was the natural and necessary construction of the words "under an order for the payment of any costs" and "in respect of those costs". Those costs referred back to costs payable under the order.

If a contentious business agreement encompassed more than one action, it would obviously be necessary to exclude costs payable by the client to his solicitor for any action in which he had recovered no costs from another party. The same, in his Lordship's view, applied where the order for costs was for part only, it might be a small part, of the total costs of a single action.

Thus, in his Lordship's agreement with Mr Justice Tuckey, but once it was seen that the comparison was to be made between the costs to

which the order related and the amount payable by the receiving party to his solicitor "in respect of those costs", it must follow that costs which were irrecoverable had to be left out of both sides of the comparison.

The exact nature of the comparison would of course depend on the nature of the contentious business agreement, if the agreement itself was not precluded from commencing an action in the county court for unpaid wages even though the claim for wages could have been made at the same time as the claim for unfair dismissal in the industrial tribunal.

The Court of Appeal so held in allowing an appeal brought by the plaintiff, Chaagan Lal Dattani, against the decision of Judge Rich, QC, at Central London County Court on April 18, 1996 that the plaintiff was estopped by reason of the doctrine of res judicata, that the matter had been adjudicated upon, from making a claim for unpaid wages from the defendant company, Trio Supermarkets Ltd.

Mr David Giles for Mr Dattani; Mr Paul Stallebrass for the defendant.

LORD JUSTICE MUMMERY said that the principal issue in the case was whether a claim in the county court could be maintained in view of an earlier settlement of a case of unfair dismissal in the industrial tribunal.

The case came before the industrial tribunal on November 9, 1992. However, it never had to be adjudicated since the parties reached a compromise.

On December 1, 1992 the parties were sent a document from the industrial tribunal headed "Decision of the industrial tribunal" and under a second heading "Decision" it was recorded that "This case has been settled on the basis that the respondent pay the applicant the sum of £5,000."

The only other relevant document but the practice was to expunge cautions, and there was the specific problem that there might be no trace or footprint of a caution, but that did not mean that a caution was time limited.

His Lordship had reached the conclusion that this was a plain case. Parliament had in the clear terms provided that there was from October 1997 to be a comprehensive and uniform non-discretionary disqualification where a conviction of an offence of a specified nature was administered with a relevant admission in the case of a prospective adopter or foster parent or member of his household.

Although in this case the legislation had borne down severely on an existing foster parent who had served the care system honourably and well, that was the plain decision that had been taken by the legislature and put into inescapable effect.

Solicitors: Mr Peter J. Burns, Lincoln; Solicitor, Department of Health; Norman Green, Skegness; Malcolm Lincoln, Skiggis & Betheridge, Lincoln.

pro prospective employment would give the person access to persons under 18.

The Children Act 1989 and associated regulations took into account the 1974 Act and the 1975 Exception Order by empowering a court to dispense with a two-fold discretion, by which:

First, it could ask prospective adopters or foster parents about previous criminal convictions provided that it made it clear that they did so by reference to the 1974 Act, if it did not, the cover of the 1974 Act applied.

Second, if it received information that there was a conviction it had a discretion as to the weight it gave it.

The 1997 regulations were also plainly within the contemplation of section 4(1) of the 1974 Act, so that the clear provision in the regulations that a conviction was a complete and enduring bar to a person becoming a foster parent or adopter beyond any time limit which might otherwise apply under the 1974 Act, was a step which itself took that disqualification into account.

It was on that analysis difficult to extract the comfort of some overriding principle from section 4(1) of the 1974 Act.

Nor was there any reason why a caution should be treated any differently from a conviction for the purposes of the regulations, since both related to criminal acts and required sustainable evidence sufficient to raise a serious prospect of conviction.

There was a problem with cautions: a data problem. Old convictions could linger on in the databanks of the police services

causing grievous bodily harm with intent, to which McMaster had pleaded guilty, and violent disorder.

A concurrent sentence of three months imprisonment imposed on McMaster on a plea of guilty to assault occasioning actual bodily harm was ordered to be served consecutively.

LORD JUSTICE BELDAM said that this case was among the worst of its kind to have come before the court.

In R v Jey (1988) 3 Cr App R (S) 188, a similar case, Lord Justice Griffiths had said that the courts "must do all in their power by exemplary sentences to deter such behaviour". Since then the number of such attacks had not diminished.

The unduly lenient sentences imposed in this case were hardly likely to have a proper deterrent effect on those who embarked on that kind of brutal attack. Further, the making of a sentence concurrent for a wholly separate offence was wrong in principle.

Corrections

In R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Mulkerrins (The Times February 3) Mr Timothy Sewell appeared as junior to Mr Michael Mansfield, QC, for the applicant.

In Preston v Wolverhampton NHS Trust (The Times February 9) Thompson acted as agent for Mr Bruce Piper, Graham Clayton, Michael Scott & Co and Reynolds Porter Chamberlain in the Preston limb of the case.

Exemplary sentences required

Regina v McMaster

Exemplary sentences had to be passed to deter brutal attacks.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Beldam, Mr Justice Johnson and Mr Justice Kay) so stated on February 10, when increasing sentences passed on two young men who took part in a group attack on one man who was beaten and kicked while lying on the ground.

The court, on a reference by the Attorney-General, substituted four and a half years for 30-month prison imposed on Shane McMaster, aged 21; and three years for 17 months in a young offenders institution imposed on Danny Case, aged 19, by Newport (Isle of Wight) Crown Court (Mr Recorder R. Miller) for offences of

Adopters cannot rely on rehabilitation Act

Lincolnshire County Council v B & Others X and Another Intervening

Before Mr Michael Horowitz, QC (Judgment February 10)

A person would be disqualified from adopting or fostering a child if he, or a person aged over 18 within his household, had a criminal conviction for or had been cautioned in respect of and admitted a serious sexual offence or any offence of violence above the level of common assault or battery, by the operation of the Children and Young Persons (Protection from Offenders) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations SI 1997 No 2298.

The protection afforded by section 4(1) and (2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 did not apply in such cases.

Mr Michael Horowitz, QC, sitting as a deputy judge of the Family Division, so held in a reserved judgment, in deciding a preliminary issue, arising in the course of care proceedings, as to the scope of the Regulations. The hearing was in chambers with judgment in open court.

A mother, the first respondent, had placed her three children in voluntary care in September 1996. They were fostered by one Mr X, an intervener in the proceedings. The interim care plan of the applicant, Lincolnshire County Council, was that the three children should remain with the Xs.

An issue arose as to whether the placement with the Xs was lawful in the light of the 1997 Regulations, since Mr X, who was an otherwise appropriate foster father, had in 1983 received a caution on the basis of his admission that he had caused actual bodily harm to another child in his care. That

placement was resumed after a brief interval and the child was subsequently adopted by the Xs.

The Secretary of State for Health, who was responsible for the legislation, intervened in the hearing of the preliminary issue. The three children were respondents by their guardian ad litem.

Mr Brian Jubb for Lincolnshire County Council; Mr Neil Garnham for the Secretary of State for Health; Miss Caroline Rodger for Mr X; Miss Alison Ball, QC and Miss Catherine Jenkins for the mother; Miss Barbara Connolly for the guardian ad litem.

HIS LORDSHIP said that the 1997 Regulations did not extend or abridge a discretion. On the contrary, they provided that no person should be regarded by the relevant authority as suitable in the case of an adopter or foster parent if he or anyone over 18 in his household had been convicted of a specific offence or had been cautioned by a constable in respect of any such offence which at the time the caution was given he had admitted.

The specific offences included serious sexual offences and also offences of violence above the level charged as common assault and battery. Thus the apparent effect, and this was intended by their express terms, was that one such conviction or caution, whenever such occurred, would have a lasting effect.

His Lordship set out the relevant regulations and associated guidelines, which were intended by their express terms to take immediate effect. It followed from those provisions that the termination of the current placement was the inevitable consequence if his Lordship held that the regulations arose in the instant case. The

regulations applied equally to convictions as to cautions. His Lordship considered the nature and fundamental requirements of a caution.

It was the practice of the Lincolnshire Police to retain their cautions after three years, after which they would be expunged from the computer leaving no recordable or accessible trace.

That was to be contrasted with the practice of the Metropolitan Police which expunged its records after three years, if it was not under the Lincolnshire practice. Mr X's caution would have been deleted in October 1998, but had the offence occurred in London, deletion would have occurred in October 1996.

The local authority had sought, in its plea, to prevent the effect of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 not only in relation to persons with a criminal conviction, but also by way of analogy, to cautions, which were wholly absent from that Act.

His Lordship considered the relevant provisions of the 1974 Act. The apparent overarching statement of principle contained in section 4(1) had to be qualified by consideration of section 7(2) in which the blanket immunity conferred by section 4(1) was stripped in certain specified proceedings, including proceedings relating to adoption or with respect to minors or the provision of accommodation for minors, the service provided by foster parents.

Furthermore, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order SI 1975 No 1023, the cover afforded by section 4(2) might be lifted if the

pro prospective employment would give the person access to persons under 18.

The Children Act 1989 and associated regulations took into account the 1974 Act and the 1975 Exception Order by empowering a court to dispense with a two-fold discretion, by which:

First, it could ask prospective adopters or foster parents about previous criminal convictions provided that it made it clear that they did so by reference to the 1974 Act, if it did not, the cover of the 1974 Act applied.

Second, if it received information that there was a conviction it had a discretion as to the weight it gave it.

The 1997 regulations were also plainly within the contemplation of section 4(1) of the 1974 Act, so that the clear provision in the regulations that a conviction was a complete and enduring bar to a person becoming a foster parent or adopter beyond any time limit which might otherwise apply under the 1974 Act, was a step which itself took that disqualification into account.

It was on that analysis difficult to extract the comfort of some overriding principle from section 4(1) of the 1974 Act.

Nor was there any reason why a caution should be treated any differently from a conviction for the purposes of the regulations, since both related to criminal acts and required sustainable evidence sufficient to raise a serious prospect of conviction.

There was a problem with cautions: a data problem. Old convictions could linger on in the databanks of the police services

Subrogation duty extended

Faircharm Investments Ltd v Citibank International plc

Before Lord Justice Henry, Lord Justice Aldous and Sir Christopher Staughton (Judgment February 10)

The principle from insurance law that a party which had discharged a liability incumbent on another party and was put in its place was under a duty not to destroy or prejudice any right or remedy available to that party and would be liable to compensate it if it did, was applicable where a party had taken over and paid off another's mortgage debt.

The Court of Appeal so stated in a reserved judgment when dismissing an appeal by Citibank International plc against part of a decision of Judge Levis, QC, sitting as a High Court judge, on October 4, 1996 concerning its application to set aside a judgment entered by Faircharm Investments Ltd in default. The judge had upheld on different grounds the decision of Deputy Master Wall who on February 27, 1996 had refused Citibank's application to set the judgment aside.

Faircharm had taken over a borrower's mortgage debt due to Citibank and its life insurance policy. Citibank had agreed that the policy surrender value would be paid to Faircharm. Faircharm sued for the proceeds and the judge entered judgment in default which

Citibank sought to set aside on the ground of irregularity.

Mr J. R. T. Ryland for Citibank; Mr Mark Warwick for Faircharm.

SIR CHRISTOPHER STAUGHTON said while it was accepted that the judgment was irregular, if Citibank was bound to lose on a subsequent application for summary judgment, then it would be pointless to set aside the judgment.

Citibank would not succeed: (i) because, as the deputy master held, Citibank was contracted to commit the proceeds of the policy to Faircharm and there must be an implied term that Citibank would not destroy that obligation; and (ii) because, even if there were no agreement, Faircharm was subrogated in the rights of Citibank.

It was a principle of insurance law that a subrogator was under a duty not to destroy or prejudice any right or remedy of the subrogee and that he would be liable to compensate the subrogee if he did: see *MacGillivray on Insurance Law* (9th edition (1997) paragraph 22-55). The same principle must apply where a prior encumbrancer had been paid off by a subsequent encumbrancer.

Lord Justice Henry and Lord Justice Aldous agreed.

Solicitors: Charles Caplin & Co; Bude Nathan Iwanter, Golder's Green.

Use does not create right of access

Regina v Secretary of State for the Environment, Ex parte Stevens

The criterion for classification of a track as a road used as a public highway, pursuant to section 27 of the National Parks and Countryside Act 1949, was not evidence of an existing vehicular right of way over the track.

The question was whether there had been significant vehicular use prior to 1950 as the Road Traffic Act 1930 had made it an offence to drive a motorised vehicle along a footpath or bridleway and subsequent user could not create a

new right.

Mr Justice Sullivan so held in the Queen's Bench Division on February 16 when dismissing an application by Mr Tim Stevens challenging a decision of the Secretary of State for the Environment to reclassify a road used as a public highway in Avon as a byway open to all traffic.

HIS LORDSHIP said that the law would be concerned with the creation of rights based on a long user which had been prohibited by public statute: see *Robinson v Adair* (The Times March 2, 1995).

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

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THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

سكزا من الأصل

British hopefuls fail to last course as famous melody lingers on

Seizinger and colleagues give Germany clean sweep

FROM ROB HUGHES IN NAGANO

THEY are playing our tune in Nagano. But Great Britain is not responding. Every hour of every day, whenever a telephone call is put on hold in the Olympic city, a digitalised rendition of *Bohème* rings out. Unless the British bobsleigh four can answer the call, the music to which Torvill and Dean danced for Britain's last Winter Games gold medal in 1984 will be as close as they get to glory.

Yesterday, as a window of perfect weather opened, briefly, in the Shiga Kogen hills, it was Germans and Austrians who took splendid advantage... oh, and an Australian, won her nation's first skiing medal. Steffi Némethy, it turns out. Zali Steggall took bronze for Australia in the women's slalom but barely had that contest begun than Britain's own Emma Carrick-

slid out on his bottom after two laps: Jasper was outpaced and disqualified for impeding an American.

We are left to admire how others do it and to ponder how they fund it. Carrick-Anderson, Gooch and Jasper did not come to Nagano frivolously; they are not without talent or spirit. They are the best Britain has. Rather than them feeling the nation's embarrassment, we must ask why their development is hampered at every twist and turn and what, if anything, will be done for the next generation.

One thing is crystal clear. Maier, though he worked as a bricklayer while he fought for recognition within the Austrian system, was born and bred advantaged, for he represents a country in which skiing is the proudest sporting discipline to aspire to. The training, financial support and competitive environment have been available for decades and there are such role models as Anton Sailer and Franz Klammer.

So never mind that Maier took an unchartered flight in the downhill last weekend. In the giant slalom yesterday, as in the super giant slalom on Tuesday, his strong jaw was set firm, his eyes so focused that Tommy Moe, the American, referred to him as a barbarian, a machine man. Maier challenged the mountain and won. Tomba tried to do the same and fell head over heels.

Maier now has two golds to prove that pain-killers could not help him to overcome. His skis ran like blades through surface snow that others complain is too soft. "Yeah, I was charging the second run," he said. "I must ski on the limit. It doesn't make me a hero, but it makes me happy."

The Germans, whose domination over Austrians and Swiss on the women's slopes has been a revelation, were just as happy. Katja Seizinger, like Maier a double winner, we could foresee, but a German one-two-three in the



Maier in full flight in the men's giant slalom en route to his second gold medal in Nagano

combined, and then Hilde Gerg keeping the run going by beating Deborah Compagnoni, of Italy, in the slalom, suggests that something is afoot.

A significant number of German Olympians are listed as soldiers or border police and this means serving their country on the pistes rather than at their posts. The old East Germany made more unnerving — and drugged — sporting soldiers, but the modern method is

a way of paying for development until the competitors are able to reach out for the millions available on the world tour.

It will serve no great purpose here — while there is so much achievement and talent to report — to take sides in the bureaucratic squabbling that starves British youngsters of available lottery money. But the budget to prepare and dress Great Britain's meagre squad for Nagano totalled

Maier's reward is poetic justice for bold approach

There is only one treatise on sports psychology worth bothering with, and that is Rudyard Kipling's *If*. The poem is also a handy guide for all those who write about or broadcast sport. Let us start with the most famous line, the one often above the players' entrance to the Centre Court at Wimbledon: "If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster / And treat those two imposters just the same."

Television has a gourmandising hunger for triumph and disaster and it glories in zooming in on every individual who shows any sign of falling to achieve this perfect indifference, which is the central challenge of the *If* test. For the past fortnight, the screens have been full of chaps rolling on the snow in anguish, women piling on top of each other in icy joy, tears of elation, tears of disappointment, self-pity, marching bands, hand across the eternal snows and ice. Which made the second gold medal of Hermann Maier, the great — I think that the word is admissible now — Austrian skier, rather unusual. Television, uncharacteristically, has gone easy on the various bits of anguish and elation at the foot of the slope. Partly this is because of the truncated highlights packaging, and partly, no doubt, it is a reaction to the skier's contractual obligation to finish each run with a world record attempt in the sport of getting your skis off and showing the brand name into the camera.

All of which left us with very little of Hermann Maier's performance apart from his performance. And it was enough; it was more than enough. And this is odd, because television deals with individual personality and there is very little individuality in a skiing event. Except when Maier skis. This past fortnight of the Winter Games has told us a tale of Maier. By degrees we have seen his mastery of the *If* test. "If you can wait, and not be tired by waiting..." The Alpine events have brought us endless waiting. "How do you cope with it?" "Well, you just try and maintain your focus..." "Whatever that means. Waiting is not good, television. Godot was obsessively punctual when compared with Japanese skiing weather."

gone to those who coped best with the waiting part of the *If* test. But Maier ended his first wait not with triumph but disaster. His crash in the downhill was a more spectacular fight than anything the free-style aerial skiers managed.

His subsequent victory in the super-G added triumph to disaster. That meant that when it came to the giant slalom, he had both imposters to deal with at once. "If you can dream — and not make dreams your master..." The Olympic Games examine that aspect of the *If* test more closely than most other things on earth.

In the best Olympic sports, the Olympic Games represent the greatest of dreams. The Olympic gold medal is a prize compared with which all others are baubles. The Olympics exist to overwhelm competitors with hopes and dreams — one chance in four years, one chance in a lifetime. It is too much to ask. At least, it is for most.

Maier was leading after the first round of the giant slalom. A comfortable lead, as Alpine skiing leads go. A good half-second. What to do? "If you can make one heap of all your winnings / And risk it on one turn of pitch and toss..." Which is what Maier had already done in the downhill. "... And lose, and start again at your beginnings..."

One slalom skier looks pretty much the same, zig-zagging down the side of a hill in his Emma Peel jumpsuit, helmeted and goggled beyond recognition. But not Maier. I remember watching Ayrtton Sena take pole position in a car that was not fast enough to do the job. Sena hurled the car about like a man in a psychopathic rage, the most elegant of drivers turned butcher.

"Maier always skis as Sena drove that day. You don't have to know anything about skiing to see that. The winter body shapes, the angry phrases of affronted snow, all these bits of a man on the limit, making his life."

Play it safe? Maier has no understanding of such a notion. "If you can fill the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run..." "But Maier did not do it. His aim is always to fill each minute with a good 70 seconds and he more or less succeeded. It was victory in the grand manner: television told us a vivid tale.



Anderson, from Dunblane, slithered out at the top of her first run. At least she kept Olympian company there because Alberto Tomba, one of the legends of the sport, lasted a mere 18 seconds before nosediving out of the men's giant slalom — an event that confirmed Hermann Maier's supremacy among present ski racers.

Poor Carrick-Anderson. Four years of underfunded loneliness as a Briton practising abroad and she loses her footing on the glacial Mount Yakebitai. Poor Britain (the Great seems inappropriate). And poor Nicky Gooch and Matt Jasper, short-track skaters who represented the old country splendidly in the past but who departed swiftly from the 500 metres sprint. Gooch, one of 900,000 Iu victims in Japan,



Tomba lies disconsolate in the snow after crashing out

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HOW TO ENTER

Choose six drivers and six constructors, three from each of the four groups, left. Readers in the UK and Irish Republic can enter by calling the 24-hour hotline on 0891 40 50 01 (+44 990 100 311 toll). Calls last about seven minutes and must be made using a Touch-tone telephone. Follow the instructions and tap in your 12 two-digit selections in turn. The order in which you register your first three drivers will be your predictions for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd finishing places for the grands prix where bonus points apply. You will then be asked to give your Fantasy Formula One team name (max 16 characters), together with your details. You will receive a 10-digit PIN as confirmation of your entry.

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02 Michael Schumacher	06 Olivier Panis	10 Jean Alesi	
03 David Coulthard	07 Heinz-Harald Frentzen	11 Rubens Barrichello	
04 Giancarlo Fisichella	08 Eddie Irvine		
GROUP B DRIVERS			
12 Alexander Wurz	16 Mika Salo	20 Ricardo Rosset	
13 Ralf Schumacher	17 Pedro Diniz	21 Shinji Nakano	
14 Jarno Trulli	18 Jan Magnussen	22 Espen Tuxen	
15 Johnny Herbert	19 Toranosuke Takagi		
GROUP C CONSTRUCTORS		GROUP D CONSTRUCTORS	
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CHANGING TIMES

Two test positive for drugs

THE Winter Olympic Games here have been contaminated by more marijuana than just the amount inhaled by Ross Rebagliati, the Canadian snowboarder. He got his gold medal back after pleading that he must have passively inhaled someone else's drugs. But it emerged yesterday that two other athletes gave urine samples that proved positive for the so-called social drug.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC), whose attempt to strip Rebagliati of his honour was overruled by a court of arbitration, refuses to say who, when or in what sports the abusers were

caught. That leaves just this weekend for media sleuths and intrigued Japanese police to try to flush them out.

Meanwhile, Rebagliati is being fêted in his home town, Whistler, near Vancouver. "You guys rule," the returning hero told a huge audience at the village square. "You guys are great. You let me know that no matter what the outcome of the drugs charge, I am your champion."

He is not such a champion to the IOC. In Nagano yesterday it was revealed that, after the court of arbitration exonerated Rebagliati, the IOC

medical commission received written evidence from a Canadian laboratory that Rebagliati had tested positive for unusually high levels of marijuana — 90mg — in December. This contradicts the snowboarder's claim that he had not smoked marijuana since April 1997.

Prince Alexandre de Merode, president of the medical commission, said: "We consider that these drugs — not only cannabis but crack, hashish and heroin — are not socially acceptable. We must make sure that, in the future, we have adequate provisions and sanctions to prohibit their use."

Olsson puts trust in fast start

SEAN OLSSON's day of reckoning dawned in Japan this morning with a boost from the defending Olympic champion (Chris Moore writes). Harald Cnudaj, of Germany, a gold medal-winner in Lillehammer in 1994, acknowledged Olsson as "a definite rival" in bobsleigh's four-man event over the next two days.

"He is a top driver with a top crew and a top coach," Cnudaj, winner of the World Cup series this season, in which the British champion finished fifth, said.

Olsson, and his Zauzsi crew of Dean Ward, Courtney Rumbolt and Paul Atwood, have consistently been among the fastest starters on the circuit in the lead-up to the Winter Olympics, with bronze medals at Winterberg and La Plagne testimony of the respect that they command among the medal contenders.

But such was the speed of competition over the season that nine drivers shared the 18 World Cup medals. That, as Cnudaj recognises, makes this Olympic race a lottery.

"There are six or seven drivers who can finish in the top three and Chris is one of them," he said. "The race is sensitive and it multiplies any mistakes. There are no favourites because too much can go wrong for everyone."

Yet Olsson was so unshaken by the degree of competition that he was comfortable skipping the final day of official practice yesterday.

"The one thing you've got to have here is a fast start and, hopefully, we'll be as quick as anyone off the top," the 30-year-old paratrooper said.

The track is technically difficult and especially unforgiving over the bottom half.

Cnudaj's team-mate, Christoph Langan, and the Swiss pair, Marcel Rohrer and Christian Reich, are Olsson's chief rivals, together with Hubert Schoesser, the leading Austrian, and Brian Stinner, of the United States.

The International Ice Hockey Federation is investigating allegations that members of the United States men's team vandalised their rooms at the athletes' village after being knocked out of the tournament on Wednesday.

RESULTS AND DETAILS FROM NAGANO

BIATHLON	
WOMEN'S 4 x 7.5km relay (mixed targets in brackets): 1. Germany (D. Ditzel, M. Griebel, A. P. Böhler) 1h 40m 13.8sec (0); 2. Russia (O. Medvedev, G. Koldanov, A. Krasovnik, O. Romanov) 1:40:25.2 (0); 3. Norway (E. Stenroos, S. Engvold, S. Engvold, L. Engvold) 1:40:57.3 (0); 4. Sweden (L. J. Lundberg, C. S. Lundberg) 1:42:28.8 (0); 6. Czech Republic (L. Sedláček, E. B. Sedláček) 1:43:25.5 (0); 7. China (Y. Wang, L. Wang) 1:44:16.8 (0); 8. France (P. Bourcuq, J. Bourcuq) 1:44:28.2 (0); 9. Slovenia (M. Klemenčič, M. Klemenčič) 1:45:22.9 (0); 12. Belarus (A. Krasovnik) 1:45:24.0 (0).	
NORDIC COMBINED	
TEAM COMPETITION: Positions after six attempts: 1. Finland (J. Mantila, H. Helenius, J. Nurminen, S. Liikola) 238.50; 2. Austria (R. Neuner, R. Neuner) 238.50; 3. Austria (R. Neuner, R. Neuner) 238.50; 4. Austria (R. Neuner, R. Neuner) 238.50; 5. Japan (K. Nishimura, K. Nishimura) 238.50; 6. France (M. Tachibana, M. Tachibana) 238.50; 7. Germany (T. B. Schauder, T. B. Schauder) 238.50; 8. Russia (A. S. Zhurav, A. S. Zhurav) 238.50; 9. United States (D. J. Bennett, D. J. Bennett) 238.50; 10. Switzerland (D. J. Bennett, D. J. Bennett) 238.50; 11. Estonia (K. K. K. K.) 238.50.	
SPEED SKATING	
WOMEN'S 1,000m: 1. M. Tervoort (NED) 1:18.20; 2. C. Wuyts (BEL) 1:18.79; 3. C. Wuyts (BEL) 1:19.37; 4. S. Vliegenhart (NED) 1:19.79; 5. A. Thomas (GBR) 1:17.45; 6. S. Sundstrom (SWE) 1:18.52; 7. Y. Chizhikov (KAZ) 1:18.22; 8. M. Davidsen (NOR) 1:18.38; 9. M. Davidsen (NOR) 1:18.38; 10. M. Davidsen (NOR) 1:18.38; 11. S. Kuznetsov (RUS) 1:18.22; 12. S. Zhurav (RUS) 1:18.04.	
SNOW REPORTS	
ANDORRA Sodeu 40 80 fair crusty fair sun 4 3/2 (Upper slopes holding snow fairly well; lower slushy)	
AUSTRIA Söll 0 60 fair varied fair sun 0 29/1 (Some good skiing on north-facing slopes; icy areas)	
FRANCE Alpe d'Huez 81 250 fair spring fair sun 3 20/1 (Ski fairly good skiing considering hail)	
Les Arcs 93 160 fair varied slushy sun 8 25/1 (Generally good skiing on the upper slopes)	
ITALY Livigno 54 140 fair varied sun sun 10 20/1 (Spring-like conditions; hard snow early; soft afternoon)	
SWITZERLAND C Morbion 15 210 good spring art sun 8 21/1 (Runs on the glacier and on pistes from glacier good)	

Source: Ski Club of Great Britain. L = lower slopes; U = upper; art = artificial.

Balding e

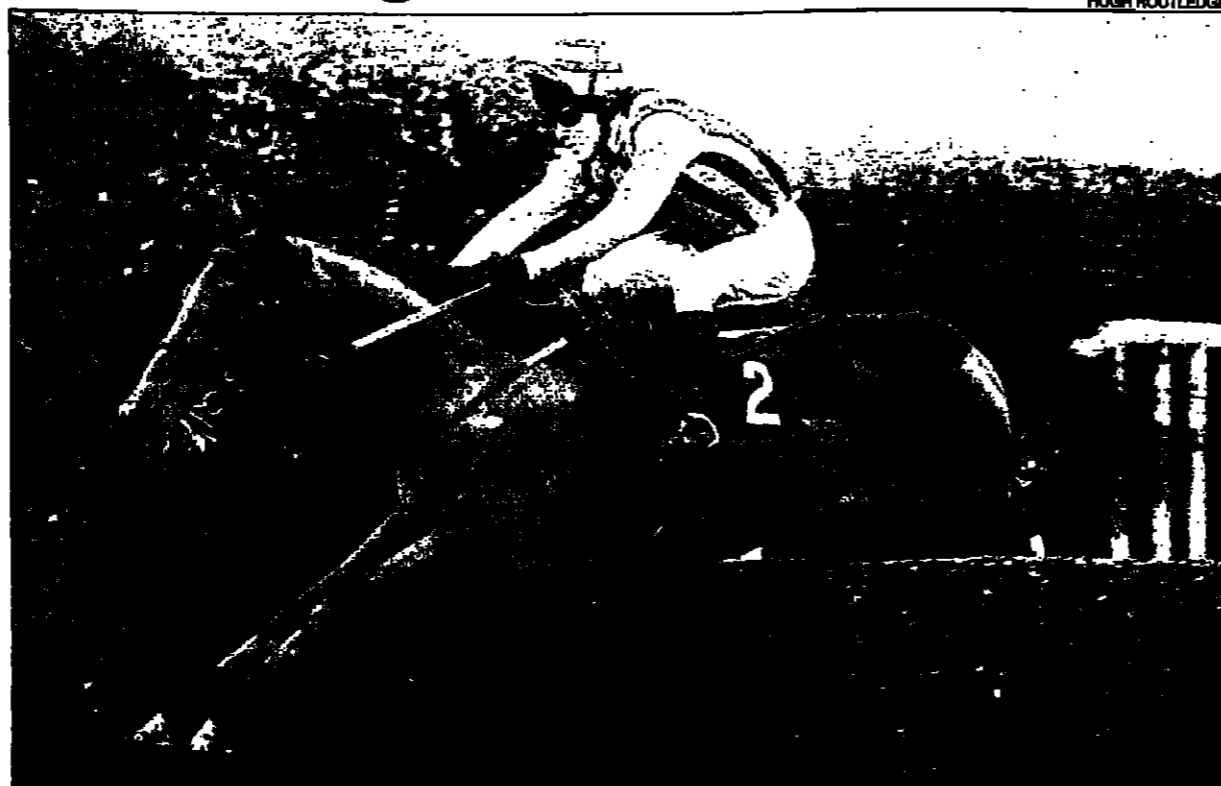
WORD-WATCH

By Philip Howard

RACING: KINNAHALLA ENDS LOSING SEQUENCE OF 102 FOR FYFIELD TRAINER

Balding emerges from shadows

BY RICHARD EVANS RACING CORRESPONDENT ONE of the longest losing runs for a mainstream stable came to an end yesterday...



Edredon Bleu heads for the Grand Annual Chase at the Cheltenham Festival after a fine victory at Sandown yesterday

Ron and Tim Dawson, the father and son who founded the controversial Classic Bloodstock, were yesterday warned off for ten years by the Jockey Club over offences relating to their latest venture...

losers over jumps. During the absence of winners, he was fined £1,000 last month by the Wincanton stewards for a non-trier.

However, there could be a sting in the tail for Balding after Kinnahalla, a well-backed 7-2 shot, obliged. The Sandown stewards enquired into her apparent improvement in form and referred the matter to the Jockey Club.

Quartet, trained by Nigel Twiston-Davies, who lined up for the Summit Conference & Meetings Novices' Handicap Chase over three miles.

With the six-runner affair is unlikely to cause as much fuss as the Swaffham Handicap, in which Top Cees ran before landing the Chester Cup, there was no shortage of drama.

Sharpical's Champion Hurdle challenge is hanging in the balance after Nick Henderson reported a problem with his Tote Gold Trophy winner. He was being examined by a vet last night, and the Lambourn trainer will give an update today.

RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S THREE MEETINGS

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes Sandown Park, Taunton, and Lingfield Park results.

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SHEEHAN on BRIDGE. BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT. When to duck and when to win is one of the more difficult aspects of the game...

KEENE on CHESS. BY RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT. Anand's chances. Viswanathan Anand, the Indian grandmaster, has one of the finest records in modern tournament chess...

Diagram of final position. A chessboard diagram showing the final position of a game between Anand and Kasparov.

WORD-WATCHING. BY PHILIP HOWARD. VOMITORY a. An emetic b. A Tebbit Conservative c. A theatre entrance WHANGDOODLE a. A bird b. A thimgumabob c. A ribbon in a hat

WINNING MOVE. BY RAYMOND KEENE. Black to play. This position is from the game Chuchelov - Winants, Brussels 1997. White's king is locked in by the black knight and bishop. How did Black finish off?

FAKENHAM

THUNDERER 2.00 Entolion, 2.30 Wince Wonder, 3.00 Knock Ladder, 3.35 Dual Or Bust, 4.10 Pro Bono, 4.40 Classic Eagle, Carl Evans, 4.10 Grand Entry.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 2.00 COUNTRYSIDE MARCH ON MARCH 1ST and 2.30 GRAHAM BUILDING SUPPLIES HANDICAP.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 3.00 E & F LET'S NOT LOSE THE COUNTRYSIDE IN NOVICES HURDLE.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 3.35 TOTE NOVICES CHASE and 4.10 LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE HUNTERS CHASE.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 4.40 BEEF ON THE BONE HANDICAP HURDLE.

SOUTHWELL

THUNDERER 1.40 Taylor's Pride, 2.10 Glide Path, 2.40 Pageboy, 3.15 Durgame Delight, 3.45 White Plains, 4.20 Stim Prior, 4.50 Divine Miss-F.

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE SIS

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 1.40 GIRTON HANDICAP and 2.10 LAXTON HANDICAP.

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE SIS

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 2.40 HARDWICK CLAIMER and 3.15 GIRTON HANDICAP.

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE SIS

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 3.45 RAINWORTH STAKES and 4.20 MAPLEBECK SELLING STAKES.

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE SIS

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 4.50 KIRBY-IN-ASHFIELD FILLIES HANDICAP.

SANDOWN PARK

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 1.45 Percy Crow, 2.20 Stormy Passage, 2.50 Upgrade.

THUNDERER

3.25 Otis Regrets, 3.55 NEW LEAF (rap), 4.30 Abeward, 5.00 All Going.

Timekeeper's top rating: 4.30 PHILIP'S WOODY.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 1.45 FOX NOVICES HURDLE and 2.20 ALDARTH NOVICES CHASE.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 2.50 CAT & MOUSE JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE and 3.25 STAG HANDICAP CHASE.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 3.55 HEDGEHOG HANDICAP HURDLE and 4.30 SURREY HANDICAP CHASE.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 5.00 OTTER STANDARD OPEN HUNT FLAT RACE.

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GOING: GOOD TO FIRM

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Results. Includes 5.00 OTTER STANDARD OPEN HUNT FLAT RACE.

SPECIALISTS. FAKENHAM: Trainers: D. Gendelin, 6 winners from 9 runners, 66.7%. D. Brennan, 11 from 24, 45.8%. M. J. Jones, 2 from 10, 20%. S. J. Jones, 2 from 10, 20%. S. J. Jones, 2 from 10, 20%.

RACELINE. 0930 168+. SANDOWN FAKENHAM SOUTHWELL G'HOUSES 101 102 201 202 103 203 162 262.

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Ramprakash eyes brief window of opportunity



Ramprakash must find form quickly to press his case

TOMORROW is the fiftieth day of England's Caribbean tour but, for Mark Ramprakash, it will feel like the first. After the longest seven weeks of even his tortured international career, Ramprakash will finally pick up his bat competitively. With a caution born of bitter experience, he is keeping his expectations low.

"I haven't hit a ball. I haven't played a game and, if I think about it, I have slipped even further down the queue," he said yesterday. "With Mark Butcher making runs and Adam Hobbie fit again, it's very hard to see how I will get a chance in the Test side."

Such public pessimism is understandable from one who has suffered so many disappointments, but it may be premature. England began this tour with two vacant batting places to be claimed, at No 3 and No 6. This remains the case.

The three-day game against Guyana, which begins on the Everest club ground here in Georgetown tomorrow, is shaping as an eliminator for these problem positions. If Ramprakash makes runs, he may yet reclaim his Test place in his father's native country.

With curious symmetry, the same was true four years ago. England came here after losing the first Test in Jamaica and Ramprakash scored 154 not out against a Board President's XI, enough to ensure he would play in the remaining four Tests. That he aggregated only 73 runs in those games ranked as the biggest of his career let-downs. Until now.

"I came on this tour thinking I would be in the team," he admitted yesterday. "I made a big mistake. I was hoping to build on my performance at the Oval against Australia at the end of last summer and have a little run in

Alan Lee says there might yet be a chance for a pessimistic Middlesex captain to make an impact at Test level on this West Indies tour

the side at No 5 or No 6. So far, it's been hugely disappointing."

It was typical of Ramprakash's misfortune that he should fall ill last week, when he would otherwise have replaced the injured Adam Hobbie in the third Test, and that Butcher, who took the opportunity instead, should shepherd England to victory.

"I had to tell them I wasn't well enough," he recalled. "It was a very difficult decision but I know it was the right one. I wouldn't have made it through the game."

"I am trying to keep on an even keel about this," he went on. "You mustn't go the other way and lose hope but I feel I must be

realistic. I am definitely handling it better for my previous experience but it is impossible to feel a part of things in the way you do when you're playing. You are almost looking in from the outside."

Tomorrow, this may change. Hobbie is fit to return and must play for his place. So, too, must John Crawley, whose aberration that brought his dismissal by a run-out might have cost England victory this week. Neither man has yet made an unanswerable case to stay in the side and there is an argument for batting Butcher at No 3 and Ramprakash, should he impress here, at No 6.

Crawley took England's tactic of run-punching to foolish extremes on Monday but this is not the full extent of his problems. His technique, so reliant on playing the ball to the on side with a closed-face and sometimes crooked bat, is simply not convincing, especially against the new ball. He did bat a long time in both innings of the second Test but at no stage has he looked in command.

As for Hobbie, he now has to produce compelling evidence that his bowling is worth perseverance, for he will come out poorly if the candidates for his position are assessed on batting alone.

David Lloyd, the coach, has made it plain that victory does not necessarily mean an unchanged team when the fourth Test begins here a week today and there is much still to be decided.

"The players, however, were given freedom to relax yesterday

after a midnight arrival in this South America nation where cricket traditionally alters the weather for the worse.

It is hardly encouraging that, even as they were awaiting a delayed flight here from Trinidad, Georgetown — average annual rainfall, 90 inches — was experiencing its first heavy falls since last September.

Politically, the city is quiet after a resolution to several weeks of post-election street protests culminating in a bomb explosion at the hotel where England are now staying.

The only unrest yesterday emanated from Jack Russell, distraught about the loss in transit of the bag containing his treasured travelling possessions — paints, baked beans and corned beef. One of the great touring calamities was averted by its recovery late in the day.

RUGBY UNION

Perry getting his kicks from recall

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

IT IS not a matter of life or death, Clive Woodward argues, when players within a national squad find themselves in or out of the match XV. Those most affected may not necessarily see it that way. Should Woodward, the England coach, bump into Nigel Walker after the game against Wales at Twickenham tomorrow, the Cardiff wing could tell him exactly how he felt after playing well against New Zealand, only to be omitted from the side that played Italy.

Some players learn to accept the pain of rejection philosophically, others throw their rattle out of the pram. Nigel Redman, of Bath, ran out of fingers on which to count the number of times England dropped him from the second row, but his comfort was the atmosphere of achievement into which he subsided at the Recreation Ground. Perhaps that atmosphere is already

A more reflective Perry. Three months ago, he was revelling in the matches against Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, rugby of a level he had not expected to play. Six weeks later, approaching his 31st birthday and the world apparently at his feet, he found that the exigencies of goal-kicking left no place for him in the Bath team to play in the Heineken Cup final, and that Catt's all-round footballing qualities counted for more in England's eyes when it came to selection against France.

Woodward has no regrets over his selection for Paris. "Mike Catt just had a poor game by his own standards, but I think I was right to pick him," he said. That Catt had not occupied the position for nearly two years, and that Perry had come through so demanding a series of games with some style, did not appear to count, and Perry was not alone in pondering the reasons why.

He has, though, reacted in the most positive manner to his omission. Three days a week, he joins forces with David Alred, the kicking coach employed by both Bath and England, working towards the time when he can present himself as a front-rank kicker. "I'm going to work on it through the summer so that, at the start of next season, I can put myself forward with confidence," Perry said.

"I'm grooming a rhythm on which I can rely. There's nothing wrong with my contact with the ball or with my distance, it's just getting the approach right." No longer does Perry want to see a situation in which Bath require the tried and tested kicking of Jonathan Callard for their most demanding matches, or one in which England go into a match with only one regular kicker.

To be fair to Woodward, he was able to discern such application in Perry when he was coaching the England under-21 squad last season and, whatever the reasons for making him a replacement in Paris, the experience has left Perry hungry for action. Unlike some, his rugby since the new year has been limited. This will be his first Five Nations and he cannot wait.



rubbing off on Matt Perry, who, within three months, has been elevated beyond his imagination, then overlooked, and is now restored.

Perry is another one of those constructive players whose attitude is to go away and make it harder for the selectors to drop him the next time. Thus it is that a player chosen for his attacking attributes, ball in hand, is as likely to be seen in training kicking the leather off it so that he can add goal-kicking to his other skills.

It is one of those recurring ironies that Perry, making his way as a youngster in the Bath squad, was encouraged by senior players such as Jeremy Guscott and Miles Catt in his development. Catt, in particular, talked to him about finding a groove in his kicking, a rhythm upon which he could rely, and now it is Catt's place at full back to which Perry returns against Wales.



Perry's skill with ball in hand earned a return to the England fold, but his goal-kicking may eventually count for more

Best returns on survival mission

By DAVID HANDS

DICK BEST, the former England coach dismissed by Harlequins last year as their director of rugby, returns to the Allied Dunbar Premiership today with London Irish. He will direct their affairs until the end of the season after the dismissal yesterday of Willie Anderson, a consequence of a dire season that has put the Irish at the foot of the first division with only one win in 12 games.

Anderson, the second casualty of the week after the dismissal by Leicester of Bob Dwyer, became director of rugby at Sunbury in November 1996.

The former Ireland lock helped the exiles through a

difficult transitional season, which ended with success in the play-offs to remain in the top flight of the Premiership, and this season they defeated Wasps, the league champions, suggesting that better times were ahead.

That, however, has been their only Premiership win and there is concern at the possibility of relegation, a possibility not altogether eased by the agreement yesterday that, next season, there will be a 14-club first division and a 14-club second division, with four promotion places open to the Jewson National League.

To avoid a series of meaningless games in the second half of the season, the Premiership clubs, meeting in Northampton, agreed that

the clubs placed eleventh and twelfth in the first division at the end of this season must play off against the third and fourth-placed clubs in the second division to preserve their status.

At the moment those two clubs are London Irish and Bristol, who meet at Sunbury tonight in Best's first game in charge.

"I'm under no illusions about the enormity of the task," Best said. "But there is a massive talent at the club which can be harnessed. I'm delighted to be back in management and this is a cracking opportunity. We have ten crucial matches ahead, starting with a must-win game against Bristol."

At the end of the season, Best's position will be evalu-

ated by Chuck Nelson, the London Irish chief executive.

The decisions taken by the leading clubs mean that, yet again, the goalposts are moved midway through a season, a situation that is drawing increasing criticism.

England A have made five changes from the side beaten 32-17 in France a fortnight ago for the inaugural clash with Wales A at Leicester tonight.

ENGLAND A vs Wales A, Leicester, 7.30p (Guscott), J. Bevan (Sale), M. Allen (Northampton), A. Adair (Bath), M. Marshall (Gloucester), A. Gurnea (Worcester), W. Ugochi (Leeds), G. Chester (Saracens), W. Green (Worcester), C. Gillies (Richmond), S. Shaw (Worcester), R. Jenkins (Leicester), P. Sanderson (Sale), B. Clark (Richmond), captain, R. Pritchard (Leeds), R. Butler (Bath), W. Greenwell (Leeds), S. Butler (Gloucester), R. Walters (Bedford), R. Fisher (Gloucester), B. Williams (Saracens), O. Barnes (Worcester).

Hope for end to cross-border confrontation

GERALD DAVIES



Rugby Commentary

Rugby matches between England and Wales are rarely remembered for their wit and whimsy. Frequently, the hullabaloo that precedes them and the emotions they release seem to leave the contestants worn by fatigue and an unduly scramble results, and too often the occasion is presented as a clash of cultures that only serves to promote bad behaviour.

The nadir of this confrontational attitude, which can engulf the contest, was reached in the 1979-80 season. The infamous match at Twickenham became renowned as "the Ringer affair" after Paul Ringer, the Wales flanker, was sent off by David Burnett, the Irish referee, for a late and high tackle on John Horton, the Bath fly half. Ringer was only the second player in international rugby history to be ordered off at Twickenham. Cyril Browdie, the All Black, was the first, in 1925.

Not only was the 1980 match abusive and ugly, but the entire atmosphere around the ground was "sour" before the first whistle blew. The rhythmic drumbeat awaiting the executioner would not have gone amiss around the Twickenham car park that day. The mood, dark and cynical, was encapsulated by a photograph of Bill Beaumont, the England captain, and Geoff Wisel, of Wales, confronting each other, eye-ball to eye-ball, and seemingly snarling.

As it is, the afternoon's immediate satisfaction comes only in that "one up on you" kind of brassiness, kindled in the wake of a stubborn and inelegant victory and about which there is very little to brag. Posterity records the score, not the flights of fancy. But is it possible to detect a change this year?

That the shadow of history has not been made to hang over the game tomorrow is a fine and may indicate a developing maturity. There has been no outrageous talk to illustrate the chips that can balance so neatly on both sets of shoulders; no words to make a man bristle on either side of the border; no tales of the wrongs to be righted and of old scores to be settled.

Each country appears, instead, to be bound up with its own affairs and not to be overly worried about the other, at least not in the historical sense. This is not to say that the game will be without passion. Make no mistake

about it, there will be plenty of that. And so it should be.

England want to improve their game. They wish to recover from the setback suffered in France. Clive Woodward, the England coach, is embarking on what is perceived to be a new style of play, which he knows is not going to materialise overnight. At least Woodward is going "home", as it were, in his attempt to correct matters. Each Welsh player, the hopes, will be lifted by Twickenham's roar of approval.

But there is no guarantee. Before Christmas, the Twickenham crowd demonstrated itself to be the most fickle of all. Indeed, it seemed regrettably unforgiving. When England did not deliver against Australia and South Africa, those in the stands did not think twice about registering their disapproval.

Wales, for their part, are eschewing the past, as there is not much of a recent past to insist on promoting, nor a reputation worthy of defence. There are, therefore, no axes to grind. Put another way, the slate is clean.

At any rate, the game is the thing. That is where Kevin Bowring, the Wales coach, wishes concentration to be centred, so that his players can continue to improve with a style of rugby that the players themselves can be comfortable with, and with which they have a realistic chance of success.

Furthermore, these fixtures must be seen in the wider context of the World Cup. Not that this should diminish the fixture, but simply provide it with a different perspective — and, we must hope, a healthier one. Breaking with the past might then provide an unforgettable spectacle.

CRICKET: BRAVE DECISION TO BAT FIRST BACKFIRES AS ZIMBABWE SLUMP AFTER SOUND START

Disciplined Doull shows way for New Zealand bowlers

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

WELLINGTON (first day of five; Zimbabwe won toss): Zimbabwe have scored 132 for eight wickets against New Zealand.

ZIMBABWE were reeling at 132 for eight at the close of the opening day of the first Test match against New Zealand at Basin Reserve yesterday after winning the toss and batting first.

A rain-soaked outfield prevented any play before lunch, but Zimbabwe made a good start. Gavin Rennie and Grant Flower, the opening pair, negotiated the opening overs without any trouble until Simon Doull, the fast bowler, bowled Rennie for 13 with the total at 30.

Murray Goodwin was leg-before to an arm-ball from Daniel Vettori, the left-arm spinner, as Stephen Fleming,

the New Zealand captain, successfully juggled his bowlers. His decision to bring back Shane O'Connor, the left-arm swing bowler, shortly before tea brought further reward.

O'Connor had Guy Whittall and Andy Flower caught behind by Adam Parore within the space of just six runs as Zimbabwe went to the interval at 70 for four. Their plight quickly worsened when Dion Nash marked his first Test since December 1995 by forcing the stubborn Grant Flower to play on for 38.

The only other batsmen to show any sign of permanence was Alistair Campbell, the captain, who was run out for 37 after looking to be in fine touch. Doull then had Paul Strang caught in the slips after

scratching one run in 41 minutes, and Chris Cairns induced an edge to Parore from Andy Whittall.

Heath Streak and Adam Huckle were left fending off the home attack until the close, with Doull returning the best figures of two for 12 off 12 controlled overs.

ZIMBABWE: First Innings: G.J. Harris b Doull 13; G.W. Flower b Nash 28; M.W. Goodwin lbw b Vettori 8; G.L. Whitehead c Parore b O'Connor 6; T.A. Flower c Parore b O'Connor 2; A.D.R. Campbell run out 3; P.A. Strang c Vettori b Doull 1; H.H. Streak not out 9; A.P. Whittall c Parore b Cairns 1; A.S. Huckle not out 1; Extras (Inb 6, lb 10) 16; Total (8 wickets) 132; FALL OF WICKETS: 1-30 281; 2-34 344; 3-47 5-78; 6-99; 7-122; 8-151; M. Strang to bat; BOWLING: Cairns 10-2-26-1; O'Connor 13-6-30-2; Doull 10-4-12-2; Nash 14-7-11-1; Vettori 17-3-36-1.

NEW ZEALAND: B.A. Young, M.J. Horne, N.J. Adair, S.P. Fleming, C.D. McMillan, C.L. Galvin, I.G. Parnell, D.J. Nash, D.L. Vettori, S.B. Doull, S.B. O'Connor; Unused: R.S. Dunne and S.G. Renneball (Australia).

Fearnley declares fruitful innings

DUNCAN FEARNLEY is to stand down as Worcestershire chairman after 12 years, during which the county won six trophies in the most successful period of his history.

The Yorkshireman, 57, will continue to serve on the committee under a new chairman, who will be elected early in March.

Fearnley, on business in South Africa, said: "I would have stood down in any event at the end of the coming season when the club's new rules and constitution come into effect. But it seems right to make the move now, so there can be a smooth transition between myself and successor."

Fearnley was a key figure in the signing of Ian Botham and Graham Dilley in the late 1980s when he was a friend of many of the world's top

cricketers through his bar-making business.

Worcestershire twice won the county championship and Sunday League from 1987 to 1989 and later carried off the Benson and Hedges Cup and NatWest Trophy.

"That was a very exciting time for the club and I'd like to think we're on our way to repeating those successes very soon," Fearnley said.

Mike Vockins, the secretary, added: "Duncan can be immensely proud of the key part he has played in the club's success."

Barry Richards has been called up to fine-tune Sri Lanka's batting technique ahead of their forthcoming tour of South Africa. A former South Africa Test opener, Richards is carrying out a ten-day programme. Sri Lanka board officials said.

Appelmans plays havoc with Graf's comeback campaign

By ALIX RAMSAY

NOTHING in life stays the same for long, as Steffi Graf learnt to her cost in Hanover yesterday. Playing only her second singles match in nine months, she was beaten by Sabine Appelmans, of Belgium, 6-3, 7-6 in the quarter-finals of the Faber Grand Prix.

When Graf underwent knee surgery last summer she was the undisputed No 1 and players the like of Appelmans knew their place. But with Graf gone and the emergence of Martina Hingis as the name to chase, the atmosphere on the WTA Tour has changed and reputations are there to be dented.

Graf's comeback has been the cause of much speculation over the last couple of months and, playing with her left leg heavily strapped, she was fair game for Appelmans. Mixing up her tactics to keep Graf on

the move, Appelmans played a shrewd match to take a 5-2 lead in the second set as Graf committed uncharacteristic errors off both flanks.

Even when the home crowd spurred Graf to greater efforts, saving two match points before breaking back to take the set into a tie-break, Appelmans held firm.

Appelmans, 25, who is naturally right-handed but chose to play left-handed as a child to be in the same training group as her best friend, took a 6-4 lead in the second set, but while Graf was able to save one more match point, a final forehand error from the German assured Appelmans of victory.

Graf, 28, said: "I'm still missing self-confidence that was clear. I made one or two

errors, then got nervous. But it's a beginning, a step forward just to play again."

Martin Hingis, in Antwerp, Greg Rusedski, scrambled through to the quarter-finals of the European Community Championship by beating Guillaume Raoux, Rusedski the No 5 seed, won 7-6, 3-6, 7-6 against the unseeded Frenchman.

In the nail-biting final, the Briton saved five match points while missing out on four match-winning chances of his own. He finally won the last set tie-break 15-13 when Raoux, 38th in the world, returned long after double-faulting the point before. It was the second successive match this week that Rusedski has been taken to three sets, having beaten Hichem Arazi 7-6, 3-6, 6-3 in his opening contest on Wednesday.

حکذا من الاصل

Golf world cries foul after Australian takes the money and runs

Norman's early cut leaves sour taste

If Greg Norman has read Shakespeare's Julius Caesar I wonder whether he remembers Act I, Scene II, in which the soothsayer in ancient Rome warns Caesar to beware the ides of March...

JOHN HOPKINS



Golf Commentary

would not fix a life-and-death meeting for the day after a tournament for precisely this reason. Another manager said: "It is disgraceful, you cannot accept appearance money and not finish a tournament."

Norman is managed by Bart Collins, of Great White Shark Enterprises Inc. in Florida. "There are two points to be made in Greg's defence," Collins said. "The sponsors knew when Greg committed to the tournament that he had this prior commitment back in Florida. It was a fundraising function at the Medalist club. Greg's club in Hobe Sound, Florida, is the Hobe Sound Golf Club. Greg had to be at a cocktail party on the Monday evening and to play golf with George Bush on Tuesday.

Secondly, Greg sought out the sponsors on Sunday night, told them he had to leave and was given the thumbs-up. In other words, he went through the appropriate protocol. To blame Greg is unfair. The contract was specifically written to include the days of the tournament. There was not a provision for a holdover.

Ian Bannen, on behalf of Alfred Dunhill, confirmed that the sponsor knew of Greg's prior commitment. "We were aware of it and we did not stand in Greg's way," Bannen said. "However, we were cognisant of the fact that he was contravening the rules of golf and it was a decision only he could make. He put himself into a difficult position. He has to live with it."

Collins said no consider-



Norman was alleged to have received £250,000 to play in Johannesburg

ation had been given to returning some of the £250,000 reportedly paid to Norman for appearing in the event. "Why would we volunteer that?" he asked. "It was known from day one that Greg could not stay beyond Sunday. Look at what Greg did for the tournament."

There is no doubt that this affair has left a bad taste in the mouth. The game, which prides itself on its adherence to traditions, appears to have been tarnished and the spectators shocked. "I am only the tournament co-ordinator and, yes, Alfred Dunhill did know about this before," Louis Martin said. "But I do feel

disappointed. Everybody is disappointed, the public is disappointed. It is not for me to say if Greg had been leading by two strokes whether the result would have been the same. It was not right and that is why the Tour fined him."

Norman was said to be embarrassed by the whole business. "This is not a common occurrence by Greg Norman," Collins said. "Greg is not the sort of person who withdraws when playing well. It is against his character."

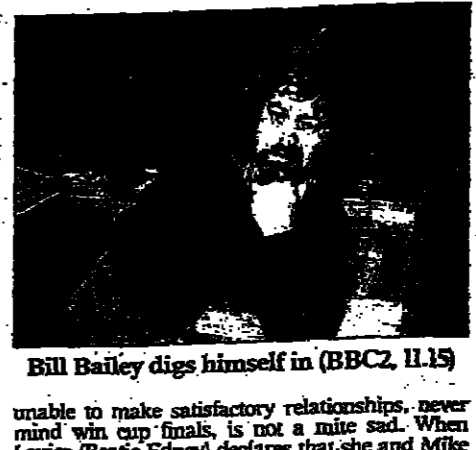
February has not been a good month for Norman. During the Greg Norman International in Sydney, he said how irritated he was at being asked

persistently whether Monica Lewinsky was with President Clinton at his house last March, when the President injured his knee. "Will it ever stop?" Norman said recently. "I keep telling the truth, but I am feeling more and more like some Watergate figure engaged in a terrible cover-up - all because people love to gossip about the President's private life. I say it has gone too far."

Perhaps he had better remain in Florida next February. Better still, he could compete in the Alfred Dunhill PGA Championship next year for no appearance fee at all. That would mend a few fences.

TELEVISION CHOICE. The battle of the robots

Robot Wars BBC2, 6.25pm It is being hailed as the biggest international spectator sport of the 1990s, so the publicity says, though a contest between radio-controlled robots seems unlikely to empty many football grounds. The idea comes from the United States, where the annual competition attracts teams from all over the world including the United Kingdom. The series promises action and excitement and there is nobody better to whip them up than motorist Jeremy Clarkson, who presents the series with Philippa Forrester, chirpy host of Tomorrow's World and The World's Strongest Man. Elimination rounds will test the robots' design, and construction and then it is into the contest proper, where the challenges include assault courses and mechanical mazes. By the end of the series we shall have a UK Robot Wars champion.



Bill Bailey digs himself in (BBC2, 11.15)

Gardeners' World BBC2, 8.30pm This may still be a quiet time as far as gardening is concerned but it is not too early to welcome the new series of what could well be called the Alan Titchmarsh show. When poor Geoff Hamilton died he seemed irreplaceable but Titchmarsh in his very different style quickly made the series his own. When Hamilton was in control, Titchmarsh is mischievous, though his cheeky asides are never a substitute for horticultural wisdom. As usual he presents the show from Barleywood, his home in Hampshire, where he gives the first of his weekly tips and seeks advice from an expert, Chris Baines, on the types of wild flowers which attract birds, butterflies and mammals. Tonight's programme also has the first of four visits to Christopher Lloyd's splendid garden at Great Dixter in Sussex.

unable to make satisfactory relationships, never mind win cup finals, is not a milk and honey (Beadie Edney) desire that she and Mike (Mark Allen) are an item, and boasts about how good it is in bed, you know that the affair is doomed. The only question is how, the business of tonight's episode. Incidentally, although this woman-centred series was written by a woman, Stephanie Calman, it is now written by two men, Ian Brown and Nick Revell. But you would be hard pushed to guess.

Dressing For Breakfast Channel 4, 9.30pm Dave (Nigel Lindsay), the eternal partner of Holly Auld's Carla, celebrates his 35th birthday. It is the occasion for predictable jokes about his life being half over, never now scoring the winning goal in the Cup Final and so on. But there is many a true word spoken in a sitcom and you start to wonder whether this saga of people well into their thirties

The Bill Bailey Show BBC2, 11.15pm As today's comedians go Bill Bailey is an anachronism. He is neither young, nor political, nor filthy, and he affects the hippy's long hair and beard 30 years after they went out of fashion. What we have left is a comic who relies on intelligence and the ability to go off at a tangent in a word, viz. Tonight's show was not available for preview but a pilot episode was which should give a fair idea of what to expect. Performing to a studio audience, Bailey employs a mixture of stand-up comedy and musical spoofs. In his keyboard antics he suffers from being measured against a genius of the genre, Les Dawson, but his verbal material is another thing, taking off in all sorts of unexpected directions. Just listen to him on how the tail-wagging of dogs could provide an alternative source of energy. Peter Waymark

A Sound Read Radio 3, 8.15pm The interval slot during Radio 3's evening music schedule takes on many varied forms, sometimes interesting and often absorbing. The Friday night slot takes on a new form tonight, with Ivan Hewitt introducing a new monthly series about the latest books on music. Along with Hewitt the studio regulars will be Ashutosh Chandekar, Editor of Opera Now magazine and Gregory Sacks, best known as a broadcaster on jazz. Tonight the books under discussion are John Potter's Vocal Authority, about why singers sing in their particular way, Headed for the Blues by Josef Skvorecky, which takes the form of ten saxophonists' stories and Brass Roots, by Roy Newsome, a history of brass band music over the past century.

RADIO 1 6.30am Kevin Greening and Zoi Ball 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Jo White, includes at 12.30pm Newsbeat 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Dave Pearce 5.45 Newsbeat 6.00 Pete Tong: Essential Subjects 8.00 Arjuna 11.00 Westwood: Radio 1 Top Show 2.00am Fabio and Grooverider 4.00 Charlie Jordan

RADIO 2 6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 8.30 Top Gear 11.30 Ant and Robinson 1.30pm Debbie Thorne 3.00 Ed Stewart 5.00 John Peel 7.00 One Two Time 7.30 Friday Night Is Music Night 9.15 Minutes Down the Wind 9.30 The Alan Partridge Band 10.00 The Arts Programme 12.05am Charles Nove

RADIO 5 LIVE 6.00am The Breakfast Programme 9.00 Nicely Campbell 12.00 Midday with Mel 2.00pm Ruocco on Five 4.00 Nationwide 7.00 News 8.30 Alan Green's Sportsdesk 8.30 Friday Sport David Jensen 10.00 The Right's local action 10.00 Paper Talk A review of the top news and sport stories, with Brian Alexander and Jay Rayner 11.00 News Extra 12.00 After Hours Live talk show 2.00am Up All Night, with Richard Dainy

VIRGIN RADIO 5.00am Jeremy Clark 7.00 The Chris Evans Breakfast Show 10.00 Russ Williams 1.00pm Nick Abbot 4.00 Robin Banks 7.00 (FM) Paul Coyne (AM) Roy Coles 10.00 Gairn Jones 2.00am Richard Povey

TALK RADIO 6.30am Kirsty Young with Bill Overton 9.00 Scott Chisholm 12.00 Lorraine Kelly 2.00pm Tommy Boyd 4.00 Peter Dinkley 7.00 Muz Dee's Sponsors 10.00 Mike Allen 1.00am Mike Dixon

RADIO 3 6.00am On Air, with Andrew McGregor, including Liszt's Sonata No. 11; Schubert (In Sage); Gabriel's (Fis Est Filis Dei, a 18); Cantata (Songs of the Aveugle; Ballet; OI, Aye!); Beethoven (Overture: The Creatures of Prometheus); Strauss (Duet-Concerto for clarinet and bassoon)

9.00 Masterworks, with Peter Hobbie, Bach arr. Brahms (Chaconne in D minor, BWV1004); Scriabin (Les Feuilles mortes, Op 18); Bach (Sonata No 3 in C); Scriabin (Les Feuilles mortes, Op 12); Telemann (Suite in A minor)

10.30 Artist of the Week: James Boyman 11.00 Sound Stories, Richard Baker profiles Ilya Musin and describes his conducting class at the St Petersburg Conservatoire

12.00 Composer of the Week: Shostakovich 1.00pm The BBC's Lunchtime Concert, Chamber Music from Manchester, Gidon Slezin, cello; Alfredo Perl, piano; Beethoven (Cello Sonata in G minor; Cello Sonata in D Op 102, No 2)

2.00 The BBC's Desert Island Discs, Sue Lawley's castaway is Richard Noble, the team leader for Thruxton SSC (f)

9.45 Feedback, Chris Denby asks listeners' comments on BBC policy and programming

10.00 (FM) News; Back to the Drawing Board. See Choice

10.00 (LW) News; An Act of Worship; Hockey: David Gray, with Michael Reason 10.15 Woman's Hour, from Manchester with Sheila McClinton

11.30 The Natural History Programme 12.00 News; You and Yours, with John Walle 12.25pm The Food Programme 12.55 Weather 1.00 The World at One 1.40 The Archers (f) 1.55 Shipping Forecast 2.00 News; Desert Island Discs, Sue Lawley's castaway is Richard Noble, the team leader for Thruxton SSC (f)

WORLD SERVICE 6.00am Newsday 6.30 Europe Today 7.00 News 7.15 Off the Shelf: Air and Angels 7.30 Best on Record 8.00 News 8.15 Focus for Thought 8.15 Westway 8.30 John Peel 8.30 News 8.45 News 9.00 News 9.15 World Service Report 9.15 The Learning World 9.30 BBC English: The Art of Writing 9.45 Sports Roundup 10.00 Newsbeat 10.30 Assignment 11.00 Newsday 11.30 Focus on Faith 12.00 News 12.05am World Business Report 12.15 British Today 12.30am Newsday 1.00 Newsday 2.00am Newsday 2.30am Newsday 3.00am Newsday 3.30am Newsday 4.00am Newsday 4.30am Newsday 5.00am Newsday 5.30am Newsday 6.00am Newsday 6.30am Newsday 7.00am Newsday 7.30am Newsday 8.00am Newsday 8.30am Newsday 9.00am Newsday 9.30am Newsday 10.00am Newsday 10.30am Newsday 11.00am Newsday 11.30am Newsday 12.00am Newsday 12.30am Newsday 1.00am Newsday 1.30am Newsday 2.00am Newsday 2.30am Newsday 3.00am Newsday 3.30am Newsday 4.00am Newsday 4.30am Newsday 5.00am Newsday 5.30am Newsday 6.00am Newsday 6.30am Newsday 7.00am Newsday 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Chocolate money buys you cut-price loyalty

I go shopping in supermarkets roughly as often as the West goes to war with Saddam Hussein, so two programmes last night were of particular interest. One was about a supermarket chain bidding for one million extra customers and the other was about Saddam, who appears to have been playing with his chemistry.

Supermarket wars and real wars are often portrayed as sharing many qualities, but having been obliged to attend one of the latter, I can assure the battle-hardened veterans of the supermarket wars that their lives are a picnic compared with what can happen when the opposition forces are completely off their trolleys.

Yes, there are similarities. Of language and, superficially, of technique. People gather in front of blackboards, leaders make statements about team work and there are countdowns. There was one in

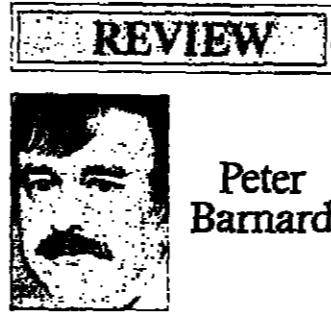
Superstore: In The Club (BBC2) last night: "It's two days till week minus three but effectively it's week minus three." Well I don't know what that did to the enemy but it gave me a headache.

I had trouble with the arithmetic throughout, which is not a new experience, admittedly. The purpose of these shenanigans was to relaunch Clubcard, the Tesco loyalty card, with the hope of attracting an extra one million members. Under the old card (I shall be testing you on this later), shoppers got one point worth 5p for every 25 they spent above 5p. In future, they would get a point for every pound they spent but the point would only be worth 1p. As the Tesco press officer said to his troops: "The new one point equals 1p is potentially a little bit weaker at the moment and that's one that we'll maybe have to upweight slightly."

Upweight? Try chocolate coins. The important thing about spend-

ing 68 million on a promotion is that launch day must go with a swing, fuelled by about a tonne of chocolate. Tesco man, announcing the bit about promotional chocolate coins, now evoked that dashing wartime activity, aerial combat: "Chocolate coins will be allocated in two waves." What, like bombers? The theme from the *Dem Busters* wailed in my chest, I taxied my trolley to the end of Fruit and Veg and as I took off for the alien shores of Household Cleaners I took a last look back. A dashed pretty get waved at me and mouthed...

Have you got a Clubcard? Eh, what, sorry? This was relaunch day at the Tesco in Banbury, Oxfordshire. As the shoppers arrived, a girl handed out chocolate coins to people with Clubcards, people without Clubcards, just people, really. Children, even. Pet lizards, I



Peter Barnard

shouldn't wonder. Tesco duly got their extra million Clubcard members, even without 30 minutes of free publicity on BBC2.

The trouble with this film was that it was not about the interesting battle for customers between the big supermarkets, it was simply about a marketing campaign by one company. The fact that it worked proved nothing about Tesco's position in the

market, or indeed about the strength of its marketing. A few of the staff got snooty on camera about working extra hours, but essentially this was a piece of publicity most companies would shoot a director for.

Nearly said shoot a dictator, but that is another programme. Specifically, *Horizon: Saddam's Secrets* (BBC2), a late change to the schedule for reasons all too obvious. I am not sure that the belief on the part of United Nations inspectors that Saddam will use the weapons he has unless they are destroyed constitutes a "revelation" by *Horizon*, but this was a pretty thorough tour of the ground, most of which is under threat of being polluted by anthrax and other hideous substances.

After the Gulf War, Saddam was given 15 days to tell the UN what weapons and chemical agents he had. That was seven years ago: you could get to see an

NHS specialist quicker than that, especially if you joined his golf club. David Kay, who was chief nuclear inspector for the UN in Iraq during 1991-2, says in the programme: "I've been tremendously surprised by the depths of [Iraq's] deception."

The UN inspectors have been criticised in some quarters, so *Horizon* is timely in showing the amount of ground they have covered and the amount of weaponry they have uncovered. They have had interesting moments. They found a \$1 billion facility at Al Tarmiya which had high-voltage power lines but no equipment: it had been removed. They took photographs and, back in America, an experienced nuclear fuels scientist took one look and exclaimed: "My God, I worked in that building all my life." He meant that the building was a copy of a nuclear plant built

at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, in 1943. Iraqi agents in Washington had simply used the Freedom of Information Act to obtain the plans.

Last night's real drama was supposed to be *An Unusual Job For A Woman* (ITV) the start of a three-part "based on a character by P.D. James". The character in question is her private detective Cordelia Gray (Helen Baxendale) but the story is not by James: William Humble wrote it. All the signs of an intriguing tale are present but part one was a desperately slow burn, with Gray going undercover at a hotel to find out if the owner, played by Leigh Lawson, was sexually harassing staff, as his wife claimed.

Plot developments were set up only to let us down. Dramatic music arrived, and departed again with nothing dramatic having happened. The dramatising at the end must mean something, but do I care what? Not terribly.

- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (66223)
 - 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (1) (56407)
 - 9.00am Sports Challenge (8229575)
 - 9.25am Change Talk (8231310)
 - 9.50am Kiddy (1) (2327117)
 - 10.30am Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1) (2258681)
 - 10.55am The Really Useful Show (1) (8084223)
 - 11.35am What Would You Do? (2843633)
 - 12.00am News (1) (8068643)
 - 12.05pm Call My Bluff (1) (167372)
 - 12.35pm Wipeout (8884652)
 - 1.00pm News (1) and weather (85994)
 - 1.30pm Regional News (1) (71640575)
 - 1.40pm The Weather Show (48673335)
 - 1.45pm Neighbours (1) (21965594)
 - 2.10pm Prolong (1) (8227468)
 - 3.00pm Lisa Country: Longest village postcard, picture ways to revive the fortunes of the shop (2730)
 - 3.30pm Wiggly Park (5417310) 3.35pm Playdays (4198141) 3.55pm The Littlest Post Shop (5482001) 4.05pm Dennis the Menace (5473827) 4.30pm L & K Friday, With Robyn and Ellie Beaven, Natalie from The Wild House (891417) 4.55pm Newsworld Extra: Kate Sanderson visits the Caribbean island of Montserrat (1) (7912579) 5.10pm Blue Peter (1) (4451843)
 - 5.35pm Neighbours (1) (2) (861138)
 - 6.00pm News (1) and weather (843)
 - 6.30pm Regional News (1) (223)
 - 7.00pm Big Brother: Tony Knowles, Alain Robitoux and David Taylor guest (1) (4339)
 - 7.30pm Top of the Pops (1) (407)
 - 8.00pm Vers in Prison: Steve treats an epileptic friend while Tracie becomes concerned when an intruder puppy takes a turn for the worse. Graduation day dawns for Keith, Alison prepares for her wedding and Craig deals with a mouthing rabbit (1) (5899)
 - 8.30pm Keeping Up Appearances: Visiting guests arrive for the Lushington Club members by meeting their special guest at the station, Patricia Routledge with Clive Swift, Judy Cornwell, Geoffrey Hughes and Nigel Davenport (1) (1) (2594)
 - 9.00pm News (1) and weather (8830)
 - 9.30pm Mortimer's Law: Drama series about a new coroner in mid-Wales. A young boy's body is found in a ravine. The locals believe his death to be a natural accident. Rachel however believes there is another explanation for the tragedy. With Amanda Root (1) (891285)
 - 10.20pm Parkinson: With guests actor Liam Neeson and Cilla Black (1) (443339)
 - 11.15pm The Way We Were (1973) Sydney Pollack's romantic drama chronicling the romance and marriage of an upper-class political activist (Barbara Streisand) over three turbulent decades. With Bradford Pittman, Sally Kirkland, Lois Chiles and Patrick O'Neal (423730) WALES: 11.15pm Two Lives International (802074) 31.45pm F.L.M.: The Way We Were (869779)
 - 1.05am News (1) and weather (2754656) 1.40pm BBC News 24
 - 1.05am Weather (2957678)
 - 1.10pm BBC News 24

- BBC2**
- 6.10am Using Tom (8071594)
 - 7.00am See Hear: Breakfast News (1) (3924440)
 - 7.15pm The Really Wild Show (1) (47914)
 - 7.45pm Olympic Grandstand Highlights of the first semi-final of the men's ice hockey: women's speed skating; live: the second run of the four-man bobs (1) (707372)
 - 8.45pm The Record (8589778) 9.10pm Music: Melanin (7038889) 9.30pm What (5143371) 9.45pm Come Outside (815387) to live down Teletubbies (19488) 10.30pm Look and Read (8277845) 10.50pm Believe it or Not (8280310) 11.10pm Landmarks (8216594) 11.30pm English Film (9685) 12.00pm Scene (57575)
 - 12.30pm Olympic Grandstand 12.30pm Women's Figure Skating: the ladies free programme, 1.35pm Ice Hockey: Men's semi-final highlights 2.05pm Women's Alpine Skiing and the four-man bobsleigh, featuring RAF officer Sean Olson who is hoping to pilot Great Britain 1 to a medal (1) (8648639)
 - 2.40pm News (1) (8354933) 2.45pm 40 Minutes: Who'll Win Jeopardy? A woman meets three couples who could become the adoptive parents of her unborn child (1) (8639353) 3.25pm News (1) (5313391) 3.30pm The Village (1) (371) 4.00pm Real Rooms (1) (5472198) 4.25pm Ready, Steady, Cook (5475285) 4.55pm Esther: first impressions (9587448) 5.30pm Today's the Day (372)
 - 6.00pm The Simpsons (963643)

- HTV**
- 6.00am GMTV (5448049)
 - 9.25pm Win, Lose or Draw (1) (8217730)
 - 10.00pm The Times, The Place (1) (86894)
 - 10.30pm This Morning (1) (5883198)
 - 12.20pm Regional News (8064827)
 - 12.30pm News (1) and weather (8687049)
 - 12.55pm What You Were Here? (1) (1) (8655440)
 - 1.25pm Home and Away (1) (70661488)
 - 1.50pm Murder, She Wrote: Evidence of Malice (3694198)
 - 2.50pm WALES: Your Century How Caerleon has changed since the beginning of the century (8823391)
 - 2.50pm Kidstuff (8823391)
 - 3.20pm News (1) (5318846)
 - 3.25pm Regional News and weather (5317117)
 - 3.30pm Rosie and Jim (1352310) 3.40pm Timbuctoo (549914) 3.50pm Tom and Vicky (5495198) 4.00pm Zzap! (1005198)
 - 4.15pm Tiny Toon Adventures (1) (1) (87475) 4.40pm Gags: Train to Win (1) (8252136)
 - 5.10pm A Country Practice (5933222)
 - 5.40pm News (1) and weather (55730)
 - 6.00pm Home and Away (1) (1) (867468)
 - 6.25pm Regional News (508865)
 - 6.30pm Regional News (391)
 - 7.00pm Bruce Forsyth's Play Your Cards Right (1) (8407)
 - 7.30pm Coronation Street: Fred believes that Ashley is setting up a harem at No 4 (575)

- CENTRAL**
- As HTV West except:
 - 12.55pm-1.25pm A Country Practice (5655444)
 - 1.50pm Our House (2134882)
 - 5.10-5.40pm Shortland Street (8933222)
 - 6.25-7.00pm Central News (171391)
 - 10.40pm Central Weekend Live (4922794)
 - 12.15pm God's Gift (47424)
 - 1.15pm Pop Down the Pub (36372)
 - 1.45pm Robocop (672180)
 - 2.40pm Planet Mirth (9479266)
 - 3.05pm Catch (54021353)
 - 3.30pm The Time, The Place (21773)
 - 4.00pm Central Jobber '98 (7616562)

- WESTCOUNTRY**
- As HTV West except:
 - 12.20pm-12.30pm Illuminations (8064827)
 - 12.55pm Home and Away (5655440)
 - 1.25pm What You Were Here? (5363264)
 - 1.55pm Murder, She Wrote (862117)
 - 2.50-3.20pm Westcountry Update (8932391)
 - 5.10-5.40pm Home and Away (5932323)
 - 6.00-7.00pm Westcountry Live (88935)
 - 10.30pm Westcountry News (218498)
 - 10.45pm Dharma and Greg (852579)
 - 11.15-11.45pm Friday Night Fiver (807402)
 - 11.45pm Renegade (252488)
 - 12.40am Famous Car Chases Reconstructed Cheaply (5970624)

- CHANNEL 4**
- 5.55pm Sesame Street (79933)
 - 7.00pm The Big Breakfast Featuring 9.00pm Saved by the Bell (1) (7) 9.35pm The Secret World of Alex Mack (1) 10.05pm Hang Time (1) 10.35pm Puggly's Summer (1) 11.10pm The Biggie Breakfast (7515339)
 - 11.30pm Springhill Drama series about a family living on a housing estate (1) (1) (4333)
 - 12.00pm Sesame Street (42643)
 - 12.30pm Light Lunch With O-Zone's Jayne Medders and Jamie Thorne (86750) 1.30pm Wild Islands (1) (1) (94759)
 - 2.30pm The Windsor: Sale of a Lifetime Angela Rippon introduces coverage of the auction in New York of the effects of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor (1) (85310)
 - 4.00pm Fitness to One (1) (204) 4.30pm Countdown (1) (607827) 4.55pm Rich Lake: Mothers and fathers who both think they are the best carer (1) (1282876) 5.30pm Pet Rescue (1) (440)
 - 6.00pm TFI Friday The guests include Sir David Frost and Kathy Burke (86575)
 - 7.30pm Channel 4 News (1) (498865)
 - 7.55pm The Political Slot (868778)
 - 8.00pm Fortean TV More weird and wonderful tales introduced by Fr Lionel Fanthorpe (1) (3489)
 - 8.30pm Brookside Jacquie's father has disowned her and Ollie takes Louise to see the prison (1) (5204)
 - 9.00pm Ellen: Ffiona Navidson on the eve of a winter holiday, Ellen finds a stray dog and decides he needs looking after more than she needs a break (1) (3440)

- CHANNEL 5**
- CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE
 - Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 63 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a Videocrypt decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder No 63 are picture: 10.92075 GHz; sound: 7.02 and 7.20 MHz.
 - 6.00am 5 News Early (7971407)
 - 7.00pm Exclusive Special (1) (4022391)
 - 7.30pm Millennium (7210310) 7.35pm Venice's Houses (1) (829234) 8.00pm Aladdin (1) (7823730)
 - 8.30pm WorldWide The education system, Universities, the expansion of higher and tertiary education (1330) (1) (7838001)
 - 9.00pm Espresso Consumer affairs magazine (8756778) 10.00pm Wings Over the World (1) (1) (2765565) 10.30pm Sunset Beach (1) (2184198) 11.10pm Lezza (2295575)
 - 12.00pm 5 News (1) (7849117) 12.30pm Family Affairs (1) (7897569) 1.00pm The Bold and the Beautiful (1) (4621662) 1.30pm Who's Good for You? (1) (789827)
 - 2.00pm Beauty and the Beast (2762825) 3.00pm 100 Per Cent Gold (1) (1091933)
 - 3.30pm Top Secret Affair (1957, b/w) with Susan Hayward and Kirk Douglas A comedy about the editor of an influential magazine and an army major-turned-diplomat H.C. Potter directs (8434933)
 - 5.30pm Exclusive (4235778)
 - 6.00pm 100 Per Cent (4223391)
 - 6.30pm Family Affairs (1) (4216843)
 - 7.00pm 5 News (1) (1063914)
 - 7.30pm Wings Over the World The battle for territory between three species of fish eagles (1) (421827)
 - 8.00pm Was It Good for You? Holidaying on the Amalfi coastline of Italy (1092662)
 - 8.30pm Fame and Fortune Mickey Rourke at home (1) (1088469)
 - 9.00pm Terror in the Family (1956) with Hillary Swank, Joanna Kerns and Dan Launa. A drama about a rebellious 15-year-old, directed by Gregory Goodell (63259285)
 - 10.40pm Bring Me the Head of Light Entertainment (8611759)
 - 11.10pm The Summer of '42 (1971) starring Gary Grimes and Jennifer O'Neill The story of the sexual awakening of a group of teenagers in New England. Robert Mulligan directs (337964)
 - 1.10am I Want to Live (1958) starring Lindsay Wagner as a woman on death row. Directed by David Lowell Rich (732328)
 - 2.50pm Red Ball Express (1952, b/w) starring Jeff Chandler. A fact-based Second World War drama directed by Budd Boetticher (2669353)
 - 4.20pm Throb Sitcom set in a record company (8333788)
 - 4.40pm Prisoner: Cell Block H (7639624)
 - 5.30pm 100 Per Cent (1) (8704315)

- SKY 1**
- 7.00am Street Strife (80655) 7.30pm Bump in the Night (822047) 7.45pm The Simpsons (21533) 8.10pm Coping With (82222)
 - 8.30pm Merry Men (8007) 9.30pm Merry Men (2162) 10.00pm Another World (7559) 11.00pm Days of Our Lives (8822) 12.00pm Married with Children (8822) 12.30pm The Simpsons (8278) 1.00pm Saturday Night Takeaway (8278) 1.30pm Jerry Jones (8004) 4.00pm Coping With (8222) 5.00pm Walker's World (857) 5.30pm Married with Children (8827) 7.00pm The Simpsons (1643) 7.30pm Real TV (8288) 8.00pm Hollywood: The Series (8102) 9.10pm Walker, Texas Ranger (4140) 10.00pm Hollywood: The Legacy (81827) 11.00pm Star Trek: The Next Generation (7828) 12.00pm The Simpsons (8278) 12.30pm The Simpsons (1643) 1.00pm Live Play (102828)

- SKY SPORTS 1**
- 7.00am Sports Centre (14469) 7.30pm Wheelchair Tennis (8288) 8.30pm Sports Centre (14469) 9.00pm Racing News (8288) 9.30pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 12.00pm Aerobics (1892) 12.30pm Aerobics (82048) 1.30pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 1.50pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 2.00pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 2.30pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 3.00pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 3.30pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 4.00pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 4.30pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 5.00pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 5.30pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 6.00pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 6.30pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 7.00pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 7.30pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 8.00pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 8.30pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 9.00pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 9.30pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 10.00pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 10.30pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 11.00pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 11.30pm Spanish Prime League (7822) 12.00pm Spanish Prime 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CRICKET 48
Ramprakash gets belated chance to state his case

SPORT

GOLF 50

Sport cries foul as Norman takes money and runs

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 20 1998

Laudrup lured to Stamford Bridge

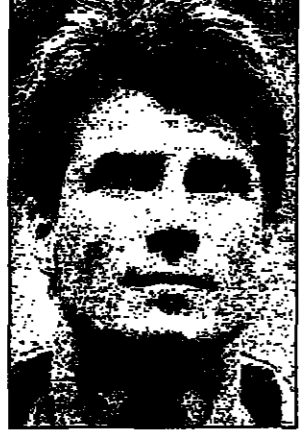
Chelsea add Deschamps to wanted list

By MATT DICKINSON

HAVING secured their immediate objective with a place in the Coca-Cola Cup final, Chelsea turned their attention to long-term planning yesterday as they completed the signing of Brian Laudrup from Rangers and renewed their pursuit of Didier Deschamps, the France and Juventus captain.

Laudrup, the Denmark forward, brought an end to months of speculation when he confirmed that he will join Chelsea on July 1 on a free transfer under the Bosman ruling. He has agreed a three-year contract at Stamford Bridge.

While Chelsea could afford to prepare for next season, however, Arsenal, bloodied and bruised from their 3-1 Coca-Cola Cup semi-final defeat to their London rivals on Wednesday night — a result that gave Chelsea a 4-3 aggregate win — redoubled their urgent search for a striker by holding talks with representatives of Robert Pires, the France international, who plays for Metz.



Laudrup: free transfer

Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, has stated his desire not to lure any more of his compatriots to Highbury, but his lack of forward options, compounded by the failure of his attempts to lure Kevin Davies, the England Under-21 forward, from Southampton, has forced him to spread his net to his homeland.

A representative of Metz is understood to have visited England this week to discuss the possible £5 million transfer of Pires, a tall 24-year-old who can play in either midfield or attack. Juventus are also believed to be interested in Pires after a recommendation from Zinedine Zidane, their France midfielder player. Any deal may be put on hold until after the World Cup, though, because of Metz's

challenge for the French championship. Pires is expected to win his ninth cap when France play Norway in Marseilles next week. It is there that Chelsea hope to renew contact with Deschamps, who may be made available by Juventus at the end of the season, despite recently extending his contract for another year.

Ruud Gullit, who was dismissed as Chelsea manager last week, attempted to sign Deschamps last summer and the Frenchman was believed to be keen on a move to

Denmark and joining FC Copenhagen. He had also had "serious discussions" with Ajax and Paris Saint-Germain before deciding that his future lay at Stamford Bridge. Laudrup will complete the season in Scotland, where Rangers are attempting to win their tenth successive championship.

"I spoke to David Murray [the Rangers chairman] and Walter Smith [the manager] yesterday and explained my decision to leave," Laudrup said. "They said they accepted and respected that decision. I want to play in the English Premiership and that is what attracted me to Chelsea. They are obviously ambitious, but they are also extremely nice people. I would equally like to say that after three-and-a-half to four years with Rangers, I will do all in my power to help them win a record tenth successive title before I leave."

Laudrup contacted Chelsea immediately after their victory on Wednesday night and Colin Hutchinson, the Chelsea managing director, travelled to Scotland yesterday to secure the Dane's signature. With no transfer fee due, the contract is believed to be worth at least £2 million per year.

"Our new coach, Gianluca Vialli, spoke to Brian on Wednesday night and he is thrilled that he is arriving in the summer," Hutchinson said. "We now feel that Brian should be left in peace and left to concentrate on playing for Rangers. They have important matches coming up and that's where he needs to devote his energies."

Laudrup moved to Glasgow from Fiorentina in 1994 for £2.2 million after spells with AC Milan and Bayern Munich. In his first season with them he became the first foreign player to win the Scottish player-of-the-year award.

While Laudrup's destination in the summer was finally resolved, his role in a Chelsea squad already bristling of strikers was less apparent. Vialli has five months to solve the puzzle.

Wembley repeat, page 49



The England front row of Vickery, left, Cockerrill and Leonard prepare to tackle the scrummaging machine yesterday. Photograph: Marc Aspland

Twickenham rivals are aiming high

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT, AND MARK SOUSTER

TWO teams will arrive at Twickenham tomorrow intent on deeds rather than words. Neil Jenkins spoke for England, as well as his Wales colleagues, when he said yesterday: "I think everyone is fed up with hearing us talk a good game, talking about new eras and all that. Now is the time for us to start playing as well as we have talked."

Whatever the relative standing of the two countries in world terms, the rivalry between them in the Five Nations Championship has remained constant down the years. Roger Utley, the England manager, acknowledged as much when he warned his players that Wales, their rugby league players restored, offered experience across the board and a potent threat in the back division.

"I'm sure questions will be asked in various high places [if England lose]," Utley said. "We are conscious of the need to put in a good, winning performance. It is that word, performance, which has tended to dominate the thinking of the England management, even though there have been

some striking instances this season of teams under-performing yet coming away with victory.

"We are going out determined to set out our stall in an appropriate fashion," Utley said. "We have looked at the areas of weakness from the France game and worked hard on them. Now it's up to the players to play to the standard we know they aspire to."

Wales left for their hotel slightly disgruntled after a thief had stolen wallets and money from their changing rooms on the Glamorgan CCC ground in Sophia Gardens. Otherwise they were upbeat: "We have never felt better, we are going to Twickenham with an obvious chance of victory," Robert Howley, the captain, said as he enthused over the quality of a 25-minute game played by his squad during which the ball did not go to ground once.

During the 1990s Wales have beaten England only once, and twice conceded more than 30 points. But the



Kicking back... 48
Gerald Davies... 48

with France," he said, tacitly acknowledging that England may have drawn too much inspiration from the 26-26 draw with New Zealand; now the need for success must restore the edge to their game.

Two weeks after winning his first cap as a replacement at Lansdowne Road, Derrick Lee will make his full debut for Scotland against France at Murrayfield tomorrow. He will also bank £10,000 from London Scottish, a bonus that he thought he had won a fortnight ago but which was withheld because he did not play against Ireland for more than ten minutes.

The 24-year-old full back replaces Rowen Shepherd, one of three changes from the side that started against Ireland. George Graham, of Newcastle, drops to the replacements; his place going, as expected, to David Hillon, of Bath, whose timely tactical

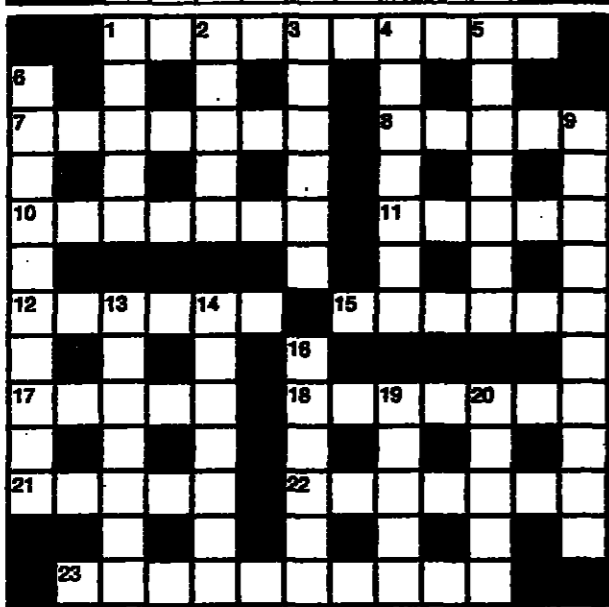
introduction changed the course of the game in Ireland. With Craig Joiner still injured, Tony Stanger is retained on the right wing.

The inclusion of Lee, who played for Watsonians before moving south, provides Scotland with extra options in attack. He acknowledges the influence Gavin Hastings has had on his career.

"Gavin has always been really encouraging," he said. "There was less pressure going into the Watsonians team after him because no one expected anything from me. I hope I've learnt from him — because he did not have any weaknesses."

SCOTLAND: D J Lee (London Scottish), A G Stanger (Bath), A V Tait (Newcastle), G P J Townsend (Northampton), K M Logan (Worcester), C M Christie (Barnsley), G Armstrong (Newcastle), D I W Hillon (Bath), G C Blalock (West of Scotland), M J Stewart (Northampton), D F Crook (Worcester), G W War (Newcastle), R J Wainwright (Durham HSE), S D Holmes (London Scottish), P Watson (Newcastle), S L Longstaff (Durham HSE), A D Hillon (Bath), A J Peachbury (Bath), S B Green (Worcester), G Graham (Newcastle), D G Eir (Curtis)

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1334

- ACROSS
- 1 Work fast, carelessly (3,7)
 - 7 Menial; liveried servant (7)
 - 8 Firm, hard (5)
 - 10 Result (7)
 - 11 Horseman; addendum (5)
 - 12 Herald's jacket (6)
 - 15 (Time) pass (6)
 - 17 Supply with kit (5)
 - 18 Prepare to fence (2,5)
 - 21 Move furtively, crabwise (5)
 - 22 St Thomas —, theologian (7)
 - 23 De Gaulle's group, 1940 (4,4)
- DOWN
- 1 Wool royal household (5)
 - 2 Capital of Japan (5)
 - 3 Element O (6)
 - 4 Non-artificial; uncultivated (state) (7)
 - 5 Collect; count fraction as whole (5,2)
 - 6 Simple; without exertion (10)
 - 9 Practical intelligence (5,5)
 - 13 Bad mistake (7)
 - 14 Full (of food) (7)
 - 16 Meek; go (to) (6)
 - 19 Quark-joining particle (5)
 - 20 (US) cattle farm (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 1333
ACROSS: 1 Slush 7 Ascotic 8 Baldwin 9 Transom
11 Toucan 13 Ham-fisted 15 Retailite 19 Expect
21 Worsted 23 Actuary 24 Abandon 25 Count
DOWN: 1 Sabot 2 Umjaut 3 Howdah 4 Want 5 Tennis
6 Disobey 10 Refute 12 Native 14 Redoubt 16 Absent
17 Exotic 18 Déjà vu 20 Tryst 22 Dank

Idyll of pike rudely interrupted

A YOUNG specimen-hunter fishing a six-acre lake in Oxfordshire has taken one of the most remarkable one-man pike catches reported — and topped it with a 45lb 15oz monster that set an all-time English record.

Daren Willingham, 27, of Somerton, Oxford, a pike and carp specialist, took the fish from waters near his home in a one-off session fished at the invitation of the owner. In all, he put 17 fish on the bank. Just two were less than 10lb. Twelve weighed 13lb to 18lb. Two others weighed 22lb 4oz and 28lb 10oz. All the fish were returned. Three others — "it may have been four, I lost count in the excitement," he said yesterday — got off. Willingham's bag exceeds any individual catch taken, even in the heyday of Llangeddol reservoir, near Pontypool, a water that, for complex technical reasons, produced a string of huge pike briefly in the late 1980s. Only a handful of 40-pounders have been caught in England, in records that go back hundreds of years. The best-known in modern times was a fish of 40lb 1oz taken from Horsey Mere, in Nor-

Brian Clarke on an invitation a young man is pleased he did not turn down

folk, in 1967. The most recent was the previous record fish, a pike of 44lb 14oz taken from Ardeleigh reservoir, in Essex, in 1987. Willingham's own previous personal best had weighed 21lb 6oz.

The fact that a gigantic pike could come from a tiny lake

will surprise many. To become truly big, a pike needs many factors to coincide. It needs a constant supply of food which, because it is a predator, means prey fish. These fish need to be available easily, so that little energy is consumed in hunting.



Willingham proudly displaying his 45lb 15oz catch

They need to be available in a range of sizes, with each being ideal for the pike's development as it grows. On top of it all, the fish needs to be able to stay well out of reach of anglers, so that it can grow unharmed and unchecked.

Usually such conditions are only found in a few waters. However, the tiny lake in Oxfordshire clearly has been producing these hot-house conditions in an artificial manner. The lake has been run as a trout fishery and trout, where they can be had, are the pike's favourite and most nutritious food. As on most trout waters, fishing has been restricted to the use of artificial flies that pike, being flesh-eaters, will have ignored. As on most managed waters, the fly fishermen will have taken their catches home because trout are so good to eat — and so, several times each season, new fish will have been regularly introduced.

Until Willingham so rudely intervened, the pike in the tiny lake must have been living out some kind of idyll, unknown and undisturbed — the equivalent of lying on a couch and being fed grapes and fete gras.

Tomorrow in The Times

Howard Kendall on the trials and tribulations of management

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